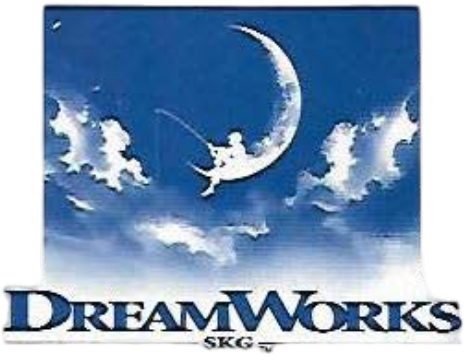
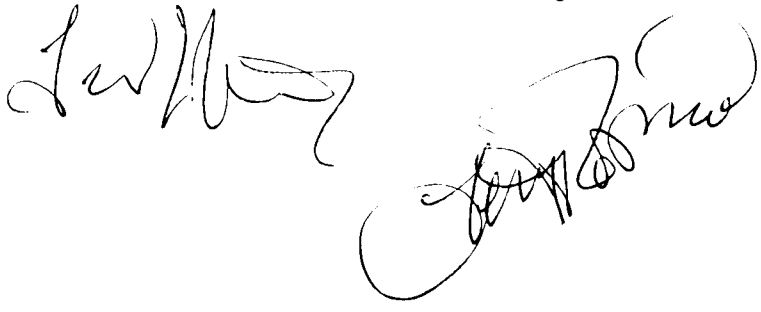

DREAMWORKS
SKG

EL DORADO

by

Ted Elliott and Terry Rossio



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First Draft
August 19, 1996

(MUSIC NOTE: This is sequence is earmarked for the first song, a duet-ballad from Tulio and Miguel about their dream of finding El Dorado. It could come in and out of the next several scenes.)

FADE IN:

1 INT. DUNGEON - GLOOMY 1

CLOSE ON: TWO FACES -- TULIO AND MIGUEL

Tulio is dark, his face long and angular; Miguel is blond, bearded, the face of a poet and romantic.
They wear matching worried expressions. Their hair is standing straight up.

INQUISITOR (O.S.)
This inquisition judges you GUILTY. You are sentenced to be BROKEN on the RACK and cast into the FIRES of HELL. Do you have anything to say?

As he speaks, CAMERA ROTATES and PULLS BACK, revealing that Tulio and Miguel are actually hanging UPSIDE DOWN, wrapped in chains. They glance at each other, back to CAMERA --

TULIO/MIGUEL
We're very sorry!

2 INT. PRISON CELL - DAY 2

Tulio and Miguel are hurled inside. A guitar follows. The door SLAMS heavily closed. BOLTS are thrown.

TULIO
That could have gone better.

MIGUEL
(re: the guitar)
At least they let me keep Dulce.

TULIO
You'd be better off learning to play a harp.

MIGUEL
We're going to Hell, remember? No harps. Who do you think had us arrested, anyway?

TULIO
My guess? The Sanchez brothers.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

MIGUEL
Oh. Becuase of the Sanchez sisters ...

TULIO
All six Sanchez sisters, Mr. Romance. Sometimes your eyes are bigger than your pants.

MIGUEL
Hey, you're the one who sold the hollow prayer icons to the archdeacon!

Tulio peers out through the bars of the window --

3 EXT. PRISON TOWER - DAY 3

A tall stone tower. Next door: a bull ring. Below the cell window: the BULL PEN. Inside the pen: BULLS. Lots of them.

4 INT. PRISON CELL - DAY 4

Tulio gets a disgusting whiff of bull. Turns to Miguel.

TULIO
It can't end this way, Miguel! We're better than this! They write ballads about guys like us!

Miguel strums a heroic ballad on his guitar, sings:

MIGUEL
Oh, I sing you a tale/Of Tulio and Miguel/Heroes and rogues nonpareil --
(quick)
They were thrown in prison and rotted away and never accomplished anything...
(goes for the rhyme)
At ell.

TULIO
Kinda short for a ballad. Now, quiet. I'm working out an escape plan ...
(figuring it out)
Let's see. We're going to need: candles. About a dozen feather pillows. A big wooden horse stuffed with Greeks ...
(more)

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: 4

TULIO (Cont'd)
(reconsiders)
No, wait -- scratch the horse.
Wrong plan.

MIGUEL
You'll think of something. I have complete faith.

TULIO
Bull.

MIGUEL
Hey, I meant it that time.

He grabs Miguel's head, makes him look out the window.

TULIO
No. Look. BULLS!

MIGUEL
(he gets it)
Tulio -- you're a genius!

5 INT. PRISON CELL - MOMENTS LATER 5

Miguel has a rope of torn blankets; he's at the window, preparing to throw, Tulio hovering at his shoulder.

TULIO
(a hushed commentary)
Okay, focus. You want this. Eye of the tiger. Think the rope onto the horns. Rope, horns. Rope, horns. It's a million-to-one shot --

Miguel tosses the rope. It loops around the horns of a bull.

TULIO
Okay. Good.

They tie the rope to the bars. Shake hands, congratulating themselves. Look happily on their handiwork. Nothing happens. They realize their error.

6 EXT. PRISON TOWER - WINDOW - DAY 6

Tulio and Miguel lean out between the bars.

TULIO
Shoo! Shoo, bull! Hey! Look! There's a cow!

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: 6

MIGUEL
Yeah! A cow. And she's pretty!
Look at those big beautiful eyes!
Oh yeah! Rowr!

He trails off, aware of Tulio's dismayed gaze.

TULIO
You can take the boy out of the country ...
(beat)
What we need is something red --

7 INT. PRISON CELL - DAY 7

They survey the cell. Tulio's gaze settles on Miguel's RED PANTALOONS. Miguel realizes what he's looking at. He looks at Tulio. Tulio grins. Miguel looks heavenward, resigned --

8 EXT. PRISON TOWER - DAY 8

The RED PANTS sail through the air.

The BULL with the rope around his horns looks up.
EVERY BULL in the pen looks up.
EVERY HEAD follows the flight of the pants --

ON TULIO AND MIGUEL: watching out the window. MIGUEL IS PANTSLESS. Lucky for him, his chemise almost reaches his knees. He has the guitar slung across his back.
Tulio and Miguel exchange an 'uh-oh' look --

THE BULLS STAMPEDE out of the pen, THUNDER into the street --

The window -- and much of the wall -- TEARS FREE. Tulio and Miguel, hanging onto the bars, are yanked out --

9 EXT. SQUARE - DAY 9

The wall hits the street, the guys riding it like a sled until it disintegrates.

TULIO
(as they bounce)
At least -- we won't -- die -- in JAIIIIL!

They tumble to a stop. A quick check for broken bones. They jump up, hug each other, celebrating.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: 9

MIGUEL
We did it!

TULIO
Yeah! Tulio and Miguel!

MIGUEL
The prison hasn't been built that can --

Miguel's eyes go wide.
OVER TULIO'S SHOULDER, he sees: GUARDS, boiling out the tower. Mean-looking. Bristling with weapons.

Tulio's eyes go wide.
OVER MIGUEL'S SHOULDER, he sees: THE BULLS, making a U-TURN around a fountain, coming at them.

MIGUEL/TULIO
Let's go!

They both about-face to run -- and see what the other saw. Turn back into each other -- then take off, the bulls on their heels. And, after the bulls, the guards.

10 EXT. STREET - DAY 10

Tulio and Miguel haul ass, looking back over their shoulders -- and CRASH into THE SANCHEZ SISTERS. The girls hang on to Miguel, who is torn between wriggling free and giving them his undivided attention.

SANCHEZ SISTERS
Miguel! You're all right! We were so worried!

TULIO
I was in jail, too.

BROTHER (O.S.)
Get away from our sisters!

FIVE HUGE BROTHERS rush toward them from a side street.

BROTHER
This time we'll rip you apart ourselves!

Tulio grabs Miguel; they run.

MIGUEL
Farewell, señoritas!

11 EXT. COURTYARD - DAY 11

Tulio and Miguel run past. The bulls run past. The brothers run past. Finally, the Señoritas run past.

SANCHEZ SISTER
(happily naughty)
Miguel wasn't wearing pants.
(they all giggle)

ON TULIO AND MIGUEL: running, just ahead of the bulls. Pedestrians are being caught up in the run.

12 EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY 12

A STATELY PROCESSION makes its way past throngs of people. At the lead, is CORTES, inhuman-looking in CONQUISTADOR'S ARMOR.

He rides LUCERO, his prized white steed. Imperious. A snob among horses. He plays to the crowd, doing dressage steps.

They are followed by a hellish parade of military might: wagons, cannons, soldiers, sailors, horses, mastiff dogs.

13 EXT. BRIDGE - DAY 13

Tulio and Miguel run up a broad flight of stairs -- and stop. At the other end of the bridge: GUARDS. They produce in quick succession: a NET. A LARIAT. HALBERDS. CROSSBOWS.

The guys turn tail, back down the stairs -- but here come de bulls. Back up the stairs, caught between bulls and guards --

Miguel grabs Tulio's arm and pulls him onto the BRIDGE RAIL as the bulls flow past --

On one bull's horns are MIGUEL'S PANTS. Tulio pinwheels his arms for balance as Miguel snatches the pants off the horns. And then he JUMPS and Tulio FALLS --

Behind them, the guards and the bulls slam into each other --

14 EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY 14

Miguel and Tulio land in a mud puddle, splashing mud all over Lucero. The horse stares at them, nostrils flared in anger.

MIGUEL
I don't like the way he's looking at us.

They jump up and push through the crowd --

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 14

MIGUEL/TULIO
'Scuse us, pardon me, 'scuse me --

They SPOT: Guards, bulls, brothers and señoritas scramble pell-mell down a far staircase. They spin and push their way back through the crowd --

MIGUEL/TULIO
'Scuse us, pardon me, 'scuse me --

They fall in step with a PHALANX OF SAILORS. Their pursuers crash into the parade beind them. Tulio and Miguel are safe.

TULIO
(to a sailor)
So where's everyone going?

SAILOR
We're sailin' with Cortes to explore the new world!

MIGUEL
(eyes alight)
The new world ..?

TULIO
That's outta town, right?

SAILOR
Aye ... we're gonna find El Dorado! Cortes sez it's a city of gold and there's temples of gold and the wimmin are paved with gold --

TULIO
So you're saying there's gold there?

MIGUEL
How would Cortes know? No one's ever been there before.

SAILOR
If it wasn't true, why would everyone be going?

He turns away, the conversation over. Tulio looks at Miguel.

TULIO
Gold!

MIGUEL
Adventure!

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 14

MIGUEL/TULIO
Guards!
(they run)
SHIP!

15 EXT. PIER - DAY 15

They've reached the pier. There's a FLEET of four ships. Soldiers, sailors, horses, supplies are loaded aboard. Tulio and Miguel head up a gang plank.

TULIO
We're gonna scam 'em into thinkin' we're the new lookouts. So no matter what happens, what anyone says, you back me up --
(up the gangplank)
And let me doing the talking.

MIGUEL
Ah. Plan A.

At the top, the brutish SERGEANT BRUTEZA checks in his crew. He stops the pair with a hand in their chest.

BRUTEZA
You the new lookouts?

TULIO
(beat)
Yeah.

BRUTEZA
(jerks a thumb upward)
Up in the nest with you.

MIGUEL
(he & Tulio move off)
First time Plan A ever worked.

As they scramble up the rigging:

TULIO
Glad to be seeing the last of this place.

MIGUEL
Yeah -- nothing exciting ever happens here.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 15

They climb OUT OF FRAME. In the distance, bulls run, señoritas scream, guards search, a hurly-burly scene of panic and terror and goring. A very tall tower topples over --

CUT TO:

16 EXT. SHIP - CROW'S NEST - DAY 16

Miguel stares straight out to sea. Unflinching. Unflagging. Unblinking. His eyes are painfully bloodshot.

Tulio clings to the mast, terrified, as it rocks disconcertingly baaaack-and-forth, baaaack-and-forth.

Tulio braves a peek over the edge of the nest. Far, far below is the ship's deck. And he's got a bird's-eye view of a seagull, drifting lazily beneath him. It looks up curiously.

TULIO
(nervous)
A bird just flew under us, Miguel.

MIGUEL
Where? Oh, man -- I missed it!

TULIO
Miguel, you need a break.

MIGUEL
We've got a job to do.

TULIO
Hey! There's water! Hey!
There's more water!

Miguel considers, shrugs. Unlimbers his guitar, leans back, strums. The music relaxes Tulio. An idyllic, lazy mood --

A sudden loud CRUNCH below. The mast shudders. The guys can barely bring themselves to look down --

The ship has collided with another ship. Hands grip the edge of the nest. A face appears. BRUTEZA. He ain't happy.

BLUR-PAN down into a SERIES OF VIGNETTES AS THE GUYS DESCEND FROM THE TOP OF THE SHIP TO THE BOTTOM:

17 EXT. SHIP - DECK - DAY 17

Tulio and Miguel mop the deck. Miguel unknowingly dips his mop in a bucket of lard. Sailors slip and slide behind them, unseen. Bruteza is the last; he SLIDES INTO CAMERA, angry --

18 INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - DAY 18

Tulio and Miguel carry bowls and a covered pot, struggling for balance as the ship pitches and yaws. Tulio is green.

The diners are the CAPTAIN (he's got a fancy hat) and CORTES (hidden behind a chair, helmet on the table).

Miguel yanks the covers off the pot. The stew inside is disgusting. Tulio looks greener.

Miguel serves a bowl of soup to Cortes. Cortes' GAUNTLETTED HAND snatches the bowl. There's a REALLY DISGUSTING SERIES OF SLURPING, SUCKING NOISES. Miguel slaps a hand over Tulio's about-to-hurl mouth.

The GAUNTLETTED HAND thrusts the bowl out at Tulio for more. Tulio takes it -- and can't maintain any longer. He turns away. His back heaves. He obviously UPCHUCKS, into the bowl. He's staggered, holds the bowl weakly --

The GAUNTLETTED HAND snatches the bowl from him. Miguel and Tulio slap their hands over each others' mouth --

19 INT. SHIP - CANNON DECK - HOLD - DAY 19

A door opens in the dark room. Casks of gunpowder, piled high. A SHIP'S RAT munches busily on a pilfered cracker.

Bruteza shoves Tulio and Miguel into the room. They hold brooms and feather dusters. The door shuts. Its really dark.

Tulio takes a MATCH from his pocket, puts his thumb to it --

The Rat's EYES GO WIDE.

20 EXT. SHIP - STARBOARD - PORT HOLES - DAY 20

Dozens of rats bolt out of the portholes, a split second before the FLASH and BOOM of an EXPLOSION --

BLUR-PAN down to --

21 INT. SHIP - STABLES - DAY 21

The rhythmic scrape of shovels. Horses sway in cargo hammocks. Tulio and Miguel shovel manure. Miguel has a clothespin on his nose, so his voice is nasally --

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
Just so you know, Tulio -- this is the bottom hold. Any lower and we're drowning.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 21

TULIO
Hey! We've been in worse spots.

MIGUEL
Just keep shoveling it, Tulio.
That's what you're good at.

TULIO
Well, it can't get any worse --

A hatch opens; SUNLIGHT spills down from above. A winch-line drops down. The silhouette of the Sergeant bellows:

BRUTEZA
You two! Time to exercise Lucero!

Tulio sighs, pulls open a stable door, looks in --

LUCERO - Cortes' white stallion - stares back at them.

TULIO
Uh, oh.

22 EXT. SHIP - DECK - DAY 22

Tulio holds an apple under Lucero's nose. Lucero sniffs it hungrily. Miguel looks on, strumming his guitar.

TULIO
Look, horse! Apple! Fetch!

He tosses the apple. The apple hits a sail, rolls down, bounces off the spar, back to Tulio. Lucero just watches it.

Tulio tosses the apple in his hand. Lucero really wants it, but can't reach it, and refuses to show how much he wants it.

TULIO
Dumb animal.

Miguel steps forward, takes over.

MIGUEL
Please, Tulio. You have to establish a rapport. Build a sense of trust, of mutual respect, before you can exploit the animal to your own benefit.
(pets Lucero's nose)
Isn't that right, Lucero?

Lucero head-butts him, knocking Miguel back heels-over-head.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: 22

TULIO
Geez. Head that big, brain the size of a peanut.

MIGUEL
Hey!

TULIO
Not you -- him. Now, dogs -- there's a smart animal.

The more Tulio talks, the more pissed Lucero gets. He watches the apple as Tulio tosses it up and down in his hand.

TULIO (CONT'D)
I had a dog once. That dog loved me -- 'till it ran away, of course, but right up until that day you wouldn't believe how loyal that dog was. And smart. He could fetch.

Lucero's really pissed now.

TULIO (CONT'D)
Ah, well, forget it --

He tosses the apple away, over his shoulder. Helps Miguel to his feet. Lucero flashes by behind him. OFFSCREEN, the SOUND of HOOVES thudding on the deck. A brief silence --

Then a HUGE SPLASH. Tulio and Miguel freeze.

TULIO
Go look.

MIGUEL
You look.

Together, they edge toward the rail. They look --

IN THE OCEAN, Lucero flails, helpless, drowning --.

Tulio and Miguel SCREAM. Look at each other, SCREAM again. Miguel grabs a rope down, leaps onto the railing --

MIGUEL
Lifeboat!

-- and swan-dives into the water.

Tulio sweeps up a sword, slashes at a line securing a lifeboat. A pulley SPINS; he jumps into the dropping boat --

23 EXT. SEA - DAY 23

The lifeboat SPLASHES down into the water. The sea is dark, rough, dangerous. Tulio puts his back into pulling the oars, angling the lifeboat toward where Miguel tries to aid Lucero.

He comes alongside, boat bobbing in the waves, Miguel swims, rope clenched in his teeth. Lucero struggles, terrified --

A SHADOW falls over the group. Tulio looks up. Points.

TULIO
(a small voice)
Ship. Big ship --

A GALLEON, the next in line of Cortes' fleet, barrels down on them. The tiny lifeboat rises on a wave and FLIPS OVER --

24 INT. UPSIDE-DOWN-LIFEBOAT - DAY 24

Under the lifeboat, first Tulio pops up out of the water... then Miguel ... then Lucero, who is panicked.

TULIO
Loop the rope under the horse!
Meet me on top!

Miguel nods, takes a breath, dives --

25 EXT. OCEAN - UNDERWATER - DAY 25

Lucero THRASHES in the water, LEGS CHURNING, eyes wild. Miguel swims under him --

26 EXT. SEA - DAY 26

Tulio is on top of the upside-down boat. Miguel breaks the surface, climbs up; they secure the rope to the oarlocks.

TULIO
Now lean back! One-two-three --

They lean back, rocking the boat backwards, trying to roll it over. Another SHADOW falls across them --

ANOTHER of CORTES' SHIPS barrels by, the wake aiding Tulio and Miguel. The lifeboat ROLLS, righting itself --
Tulio and Miguel break the surface, sputtering.

TULIO
It worked!

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 26

Indeed it did -- the lifeboat is upright, Lucero inside of it -- on his back, his hooves sticking comically into the air.

Tulio climbs in. Picks up a line --

TULIO
Okay, now all we do is tie this to ... the ship ...

All four of the ships are dwindling in the distance.

MIGUEL/TULIO
He, Cortes! Come back! U-turn!

No go. The ships are gone. They stare in disbelief. Lucero turns to Tulio, and spits the APPLE CORE into his face.

TULIO: Well --
MIGUEL: Don't say it --
TULIO: -- it sure can't get any worse --

Behind him, A SHARK FIN sweeps by. Tulio grins weakly.

TULIO
Well, now, there's no way it can get any worse --

A FLASH of LIGHTNING. A CRACK of THUNDER. A deluge of RAIN. Tulio starts to speak -- Miguel holds up a WARNING FINGER. Tulio wisely decides to say nothing.

A WAVE CRASHES ACROSS THEM --

WIPE TO:

27 EXT. BEACH - DAY 27

CLOSE ON: TULIO, lying face-down in the sand; ocean water washes across him. He GROANS. Opens his eyes --

In his face is a piece of flat wood. He picks it up. Wreckage of the small lifeboat.

MIGUEL
Hey -- you're awake. Good. I was getting worried. I thought I'd have to starve to death alone.

Miguel sits atop a large rock. They are on a narrow strip of beach, overshadowed by a WALL OF JUNGLE. Dark. Impenetrable.

TULIO
What's with him?

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: 27

He gestures -- at Lucero. The horse drags what's left of the wrecked lifeboat toward the water.

MIGUEL
I guess he expects us to haul his horse's ass back to the ship.

Lucero SNORTS. Tulio gazes out at the ocean. Flat and empty.

TULIO
Not much hope of that. They could've been blown miles off course. It could be weeks, or months, before anyone --
(realizes he's talking to nobody)
-- anyone -- Miguel?

Miguel is now helping Lucero drag the boat.

TULIO
What are you doing?

MIGUEL
I'll row us back to Spain!
(a grim smile)
No. I have a better idea. You'll row us back to Spain.

TULIO
Miguel --

MIGUEL
Look, I didn't come here to just give up and die!

Tulio scowls -- starts to retort in kind. But then he realizes what Miguel just said.

TULIO
That's right! We didn't! We came here to find paradise!

He turns Miguel around, facing him toward the dense, dark jungle.

TULIO (CONT'D)
To explore the New World! Well, THERE IT IS!

Miguel rolls his eyes. Tulio steps past him, inspired now.

TULIO
It beckons. It entices --

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: 27

MIGUEL
It scares the hell out of me.

TULIO
That's not fear! That's anticipation.
(beat)
El Dorado, Miguel. It's out there. Somewhere. Look, we'll follow that trail.

Miguel looks. The jungle is impenetrable.

MIGUEL
What trail?

Tulio strides up to the edge of the jungle, pulls out his sword. Heroically hacks at a vine --

TULIO
The trail that we blaze --

Except his sword sticks, biting part way into the vine. Tulio wrenches it free, hacks a few more times, and the vine gives way.

TULIO
It's the first step, Miguel. The first step toward destiny.

Miguel's nodding. Tulio does indeed know his buttons. He joins Tulio at the jungle's edge -- then remembers:

MIGUEL
Wait -- what about Lucero?

TULIO
What about him?

MIGUEL
We can't leave him here! C'mon, Lucero! C'mon.

TULIO
Let's go, Lucero. We're burnin' daylight.

Lucero now stands in the middle of the wrecked lifeboat. He gives them a hostile look over his shoulder. SNORTS. Flicks his tail disdainfully, looks back out to sea.

TULIO
Eh, forget about him.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: 27

MIGUEL
But the tide's coming in! This whole beach'll be underwater!

ON LUCERO: who doesn't like the sound of that.

TULIO
It sure will. But we won't be here.

He jerks his head toward the jungle, moves into it. Miguel gives Lucero a last look, then follows Tulio.

Lucero stands all by himself on the narrow spit of beach.

A WAVE CRASHES, water flowing around Lucero. He bolts, charges into the darkened, dense jungle --

Where Tulio and Miguel wait for him. They laugh.

Lucero blushes, turning beet red. He raises his head, steps past them, trying to regain his dignity. Tulio and Miguel grin at each other, follow.

28 EXT. JUNGLE - DAY 28

Tulio and Miguel move warily through the jungle, leading Lucero. A loud, annoying BUZZING as huge INSECTS dive bomb them. Miguel waves his hands.

MIGUEL
What do they feed on when they can't get Spaniard?

OFFSCREEN JUNGLE SOUNDS, including the WAILING CRY of HOWLER MONKEYS in the trees overhead. Miguel looks worried. Tulio tries to distract him:

TULIO
So ... uh. What do you think we'll find when we find El Dorado?

MIGUEL
If we find El Dorado.

TULIO
Of course we'll find it. And when we do --

(MUSIC NOTE: Here's a possible place for a buddy song or possibly the title 'EL DORADO' song. Suggested models are FRIENDSHIP; BOSOM BUDDIES; tune-wise models are WHEN I'M 64 and EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE.)

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: 28

In visual counterpoint to their dreams of paradise, the trek becomes more arduous and dangerous. A series of shots:

Miguel gets tangled in vines.
Lucero sinks in quicksand.
Huge insects dive-bomb them. Lucero flicks them expertly with his tail.
Tulio is swarmed by Howler monkeys. Through it all:

TULIO
There'll be so much gold, no one can keep track of it.

MIGUEL
All I need is a little gold -- and maybe a good woman.

TULIO
I'll take a lot of gold -- and a few bad women. See, Miguel, you dream too small.

MIGUEL
It's not the size, it's how you use it. There's more to life than riches, Tulio.

TULIO
And all of it's available -- for a price.

MIGUEL
What does it profit a man to gain the world if he loses his soul?

TULIO
You're such a romantic, Miguel.

MIGUEL
Hey, it's why you love me.
(holds a branch aside for Tulio)
We're lucky men, Tulio.

TULIO
(holds the branch for Miguel)
And smart --

MIGUEL/TULIO
-- And free!

Tulio lets go of the branch, SMACKING Lucero in the head.

29 EXT. JUNGLE - DAY 29

There is a sudden, loud FLUTTER -- a SCREECH -- Tulio and Miguel jump, duck as a TOUCAN flutters over them. It lands on a branch, breathing hard.

Miguel stares at it, fascinated by the long, colorful beak.

TULIO
Is that the weirdest thing you've ever seen?

MIGUEL
(points behind him)
Um, no. That is! Look!

The Toucan flutters off. Miguel looks where Tulio points: through the trees, a panicked WOMAN crashes through the jungle -- CHEL. She's a lovely woman, shapely, exotic --

TULIO
People! There's people here, Miguel!

MIGUEL
Extremely good-looking people.

And right now she's running for her life, chased by many shouting WARRIORS, brandishing weapons, bent on her capture.

TULIO
Y'know, that looks familiar, somehow --

Miguel reads the situation quickly:

MIGUEL
She needs our help!

Chel leaps from boulder to boulder, crosses a small stream. She grabs a piece of driftwood, uses it to wedge loose a boulder, letting loose a TORRENT OF WATER, washing away some of her pursuers.

TULIO
I'm not sure this damsel needs rescuing, Miguel --

But she does. A DOZEN MORE WARRIORS emerge out of the trees on the far side of the river.

Miguel is already moving; he LEAPS atop Lucero. Lucero's shocked to find him on his back --

MIGUEL
C'mon, you're a war horse --

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

-- and then Lucero narrows his eyes, SNORTS angrily, bolts into the fray --

CLOSE ON: Lucero's eyes. WHAT HE SEES: The stream. Various rocks. A log drifting downstream --

Lucero leaps from the bank -- CLOP! CLOP! CLOP! CLOP! -- each of his four hooves hits a stepping stone just right -- then CLIPPITY CLIPPITY CLIPPITY -- as the steps onto the log just as it drifts past, log-rolling his way to the far side --

-- and onto land, alongside CHEL, running. Miguel sweeps her up, lifts her onto Lucero. She sits astride the horse, riding backwards, facing Miguel. Lucero kicks it into high gear, outdistancing the warriors --

Chel, breathing hard, grabs onto Miguel, looks up --

-- and ALL SOUND DROPS AWAY. Time is frozen, as Miguel and Chel stare into each other's eyes. For that moment, there is only each other. The eyes of the other. The lips of the other --

A LOW ROAR can be heard, growing LOUDER. Lucero rears up, whinnies, and the moment is broken. The ROAR becomes THUNDEROUS, now --

Miguel and Chel look around. Lucero has run out of room -- before them is a HUGE WATERFALL, beyond a lagoon, blocking the way.

Miguel lifts Chel, sets her high up in the crook of a tree. Then whirls Lucero, spurs him toward the oncoming warriors --

Chel stares after him, wide-eyed, amazed --

POV - THE WARRIORS. We see Miguel the way they see him: backlit by the sun, standing twice as tall as any man. It's no longer a man on a horse. It's a two-headed, four legged beast, rearing up into the sky, breathing fire.

Terrified, the warriors stop. They back away, turn, and flee, disappearing quickly into the jungle --

-- and miss seeing Miguel get clocked by a low branch. He collapses backward, rearing Lucero to a stop.

TULIO (O.S.)
That looked pretty good, right until that part at the end.

Miguel, a little wobbly, looks over at Tulio. Raises an eyebrow -- Tulio is soaking wet.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

TULIO
Don't ask. Sheesh, stuck in the middle of nowhere and you still find a beautiful woman.

They look over -- Chel has disappeared.

TULIO
Where'd she go?

MIGUEL
All that matters is we prevented a terrible fate from befalling a frightened, innocent maiden.

Lucero looks down at himself. He's covered in mud, and doesn't like it. He gingerly flicks mud off his hooves -- splattering Tulio.

TULIO
HEY!
(he spots something)
Heeey --

Tulio picks up Chel's cloth bundle. Opens it. Inside are an assortment of long, colorful feathers -- including the long, green Quetzal feather.

TULIO
(disappointed)
Feathers.

MIGUEL
Give me those.

Miguel mischievously weaves the feathers into Lucero's mane. Tulio grins at the outcome.

MIGUEL
There you are, Lucero. Now you look beautiful again.

Lucero's suspicious. He looks at his reflection in a puddle. Gives his head a few tosses. He likes the look.

TULIO
C'mon. If we follow the stream, we'll probably find a city --

Suddenly they hear a LOW, HAUNTING SOUND, AN EERIE MELODY. It is accompanied by a soft breeze. They stop, frozen in place, all terrified by this strange keening.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

TULIO
Don't worry. It's just the wind
...

30 EXT. JUNGLE - VARIOUS - DAY 30

Tulio, Miguel and Lucero push through the jungle. The hack through some foilage -- and gasp.

In the distance before them lies EL DORADO. Vast, ornate temples reach to the sky, painted bright red and yellow. The city is a SPARKLING, SHINING JEWEL beneath the deep blue sky, in a green setting of jungle. Paradise.

MIGUEL
(a whisper)
El Dorado ...

TULIO
We found it!
(genuine)
No matter what happens from here on -- it was worth it.

MIGUEL
(nods)
Yes. For this moment right here.

Suddenly they grow uneasy. Look around slowly --

DOZENS of WARRIORS surround them, as if by magic. Tulio and Miguel smile sickly smiles. The Warriors gesture (with pointy things) 'forward.' The guys do as suggested.

31 EXT. CITY - BALL COURT - DAY 31

An energetic BALL GAME is in progress. Feathers, jade and obsidian change hands as the spectators wager on the outcome.

THE CHIEF sits on a throne overlooking the ball court. He's got an athlete-gone-to-seed look, and he watches and reacts to the game the way an-athlete-gone-to-seed does.

Miguel takes in the ball court and the game in wonder.

MIGUEL
This is amazing ...

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 31

TULIO
(he's watching the people)
Yeah -- there's gambling in paradise!

A small, nervous ATTENDANT tries to get the Chief's attention. The Chief shoves him aside.

Miguel, Tulio and Lucero have been noticed. People stop what they're doing, turn and stare. Even the game comes to a halt.

That gets the Chief's attention. He sees the guys. Stares in shock. He calls for a litter. Bearers take him down onto the court, where the guys wait.

The Chief walks slowly around them, inspecting them. He's shocked. (Note: native language dialog in italics.)

CHIEF
Quetzalcoatl?

The Chief examines the pedant hanging around his neck -- the image of QUETZACOATL, plumed serpent, TRANSFORMING into a BEARDED MAN. The serpent's head curves back to its body, which is splitting into the man's head and torso. The outline resemble a MAN ON HORSEBACK.

The Chief twists his head nearly upside-down, comparing pendant to Miguel.

CHIEF
Quetzalcoatl?

Tulio and Miguel exchange a questioning glance, then shrug at the Chief.

TULIO
Kumquat O'Dell?

Miguel swings down off Lucero -- the crowd 'oohs.' The Chief is fascinated with Miguel's BLOND BEARD. He reaches out, touches it. Tugs on it.

MIGUEL
Hey!

CHIEF
Quetzalcoatl.

TULIO
Kiss your coat tail?

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 31

CHIEF
Quetzalcoatl!

TULIO
Quetzalcoatl?

CHIEF
Quetzalcoatl!
(points at Miguel)
Quetzalcoatl!

TULIO
(jerks a thumb at Miguel)
Quetzalcoatl?

CHIEF
('finally!')
Quetzalcoatl!

TULIO
Hey -- he thinks you're this Quetzalcoatl guy.

MIGUEL
(a hideous name)
Quetzalcoatl? Bet he got beat up a lot in school.

TULIO
(to Chief)
If he's Quetzalcoatl, who am I?
(indicates himself)
Who am I?

CHIEF
You're Schloatl.

MIGUEL
Schloatl? He's Schloatl?
(to Tulio)
That's even worse than Quetzalcoatl.

TULIO
(to Chief)
Schloatl. Quetzalcoatl.

CHIEF
(nodding, smiling)
Quetzalcoatl. Schloatl.

PERSON IN CROWD
Tzekel-Kan!

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 31

Others pick up the name. The Chief speaks through gritted teeth; he doesn't like the guy:

CHIEF
Tzekel-Kan.

TULIO
(to Lucero)
Maybe you're Tzekel-Kan.

The Chief steps aside ... behind him the crowd parts. Revealing TZEKEL-KAN. Gaunt, sharp-angled. His body covered with tattoos, obscured by his robes. He glides toward them.

MIGUEL
Who's this guy?

TULIO
Looks like he doesn't want anyone to have any fun whatsoever.

TULIO/MIGUEL
The priest.

Tulio sticks his hand out to Tzekel-Kan.

TULIO
Hi. I'm Schloatl. He's Quetzalcoatl.

Tzekel-Kan looks at the hand like it's diseased. Speaks to the Chief.

TZEKEL-KAN
What is happening here?

CHIEF
Quetzalcoatl. Schloatl.

They argue. OVER IT:

TULIO
Uh-oh. Looks like the classic struggle between church and state.

MIGUEL
Who's winning?

The Chief crosses his arms, turns away angrily. Tzekel-Kan gives him a look of triumphant disdain -- then turns a cold eye to the guys.

TULIO
Say your prayers.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 31

Tzekel-Kan inspects Miguel. Miguel smiles amiably. Tzekel-Kan dismisses him.

He examines Tulio. Tulio returns the look with a suspicious raised eyebrow. Tzekel-Kan dismisses him.

He examines Lucero. Lucero returns the look in spades. Tzekel-Kan reaches out to touch Lucero's muzzle --

Lucero REARS. Tzekel-Kan jumps back. Lucero hops forward. The crowd 'oohs.' Lucero returns to all fours, gives Tzekel-Kan an imperious glance.

Tzekel-Kan inclines his head -- slightly -- to Lucero. Then turns back to Tulio and Miguel.

TZEKEL-KAN
(indicates Lucero)
He may live.
(indicates Tulio and Miguel)
As for these two ...

He takes the ball from the Chief. A club from a guard. He drops the ball -- and SMASHES IT with the club.

SILENCE in the arena.

TULIO
I think he said --

MIGUEL
That I got!

32 EXT. CITY - BALL COURT - DAY 32

Miguel and Tulio are on the chopping block, surrounded by spear-carrying Eagle and Jaguar soldiers.

Directly beneath them, Lucero is being pampered, indifferent to their dilemma.

MIGUEL
Please, Lucero. You've got to help us. We have to get out of here.

Lucero doesn't look all that anxious.

TULIO
We'll have to jump --

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 32

A sword is raised. Tulio and Miguel suddenly flip themselves off the chopping block, into the air --

Miguel lands on Lucero's back. Tulio lands on the ground. Surprised, Lucero starts charging around the temple, Miguel hanging on.

Tulio gets up -- notices something. At the top of the ball court is a large carving of Quetzacoatl, transforming from the plumed serpent into the blond man. It's a match to the image on the Chief's pendant.

TULIO
Miguel! Go over there!

Miguel on Lucero heads that way.

TULIO
(to the crowd)
Behold!

The SHADOW of Miguel and Lucero moves up the carving, MATCHING the geometry of the serpent-man.

TULIO
QUETZACOATL!

The crowd's convinced. A few prostrate themselves, followed by the many, including the Chief. Tzekel-Kan still stands. The Chief gives him a nudge, glares up at him. Tzekel-Kan looks around. He knows better than to fight the flow.

Grudgingly, Tzekel-Kan kneels, bows.

From atop the ball court, Tulio, Miguel and Lucero survey the crowd, prostrate before them.

MIGUEL
Oh my god.

TULIO
No -- their god.

33 EXT. GODS' PYRAMID - DAY 33

Miguel, on Lucero, and Tulio are guided by the Chief to the base of the pyramid.

CHIEF
This is yours.

He gestures: 'Go ahead.'

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: 33

MIGUEL
He wants us to go up there.

TULIO
Up ... there?

Miguel urges Lucero forward. Lucero gallops up the steps. Tulio crawls.

34 EXT. GODS' PYRAMID - TEMPLE - DAY 34

Lucero reaches the top. Miguel dismounts, looks out at the jungle. It's a beautiful vista. Tulio crawls up over the edge of the pyramid.

MIGUEL
It's beautiful, isn't it?

TULIO
(crawling for the temple)
Yeah ... gorgeous.

He reaches the temple wall, uses it for support to stand. He can barely stand to see Miguel standing casually at the edge.

TULIO
Get away from there!

Miguel moves toward him, Lucero beside him.

MIGUEL
Hey, you're the one who wanted to be a god.

TULIO
Sure ... a ground-level god. A god amongst men.

MIGUEL
Well, we aren't any kind of gods. And we can't pretend we are.

Tulio leads them inside the temple.

35 INT. TEMPLE - DAY 35

(MUSIC NOTE: MUCH OF THIS SEQUENCE - AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE -- WILL BE REPLACED BY A WONDERFUL SONG: 'IT'S HARD TO BE A GOD.' Along a Coasters/Platters/Dion and the Belmonts line, but maybe more daringly like 'BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY.')

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: 35

TULIO
Look, it's either pretend to be gods ... or really be dead.

MIGUEL
It's a bad idea. We can't --

They pull up short.

The Temple is decorated with gold statues. Jade statues. Onyx statues. Sumptuous appointments. They stare.

TULIO
You sure you don't want to be a god?

MIGUEL
Tulio ... we found it. El Dorado.

TULIO
El Dorado!

They do a little celebratory dance. They survey the temple, smugly satisfied ... but Tulio's satisfaction fades.

TULIO
You know ... I thought there'd be more.
(thinking)
The temple of gold must be somewhere else.

MIGUEL
They probably keep it a secret.

TULIO
The greedy bastards. So all we have to do is find it, and then strip it clean.
(studies Miguel)
Which means we've got to do something about the way we look.

MIGUEL
What's wrong with the way we look?

Tulio indicates the murals on the walls of gods and priests and soldiers.

TULIO
If we're going to be gods, we should dress like gods.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: 35

During the scene, Tulio dresses up himself and Miguel in ridiculously ornate costumes made from odds and ends in the temple. Miguel tosses aside the sillier accouterments, but Tulio goes whole hog.

MIGUEL
Tulio -- I don't want to be a god! I don't know how to be a god!

TULIO
What's to know? You hand down laws, accept tribute, smite a few non-believers and take Sundays off.

MIGUEL
What about rain? And crops -- How do I make crops grow?

TULIO
The sun will rise and set on its own. Just sit back and take credit for it.

MIGUEL
I don't know, Tulio.

TULIO
Yes, you do. Omnipotent, remember? And its not like it'll be eternal ... just 'til we find the gold. And then we roll out of here and wait for a ship to take us back to Spain.

Miguel considers, then nods.

MIGUEL
Okay. If its just for a little while.

TULIO
Just 'til we find the gold! Now, come on. Let's go greet the masses.

Tulio looks far from divine (or, actually, he looks like Divine). Miguel, however, looks genuinely regal. They exit --

36 EXT. GODS' PYRAMID - TEMPLE - DAY 36

The square is teeming with people. Tulio steps out. He is greeted by scattered, polite 'golf' applause. He's also terrified of moving away from the wall of the temple.

Miguel, Lucero behind him, strides right to the edge --

A CHEER goes up: 'QUETZACOATL! QUETZACOATL! QUETZACOATL!'

Miguel looks down at the crowds. He can't help but smile. He raises a hand cautiously in acknowledgment --

Lucero looks on. Tulio stands on shaky legs, shrinking against the temple. Miguel stands on the edge of the pyramid, the city laid out beneath him, drinking in the adulation.

37 EXT. CITY - NIGHT 37

A huge, raucous CELEBRATION. Feasting, dancing, drinking in honor of the gods come to earth. BEGIN MUSIC --

(MUSIC NOTE: Here's where we get everybody speaking the same language. Villagers start off singing in Mayan, a single phrase, repeated -- song models are Bob Marley's JAMMIN', or Kool & the Gang's CELEBRATION. It repeats, hypnotic, infectious. By the end of the sequence, it will be sung in English, signaling the completion of the language shift.)

During the song, we INTERCUT between various elements --

-- WIND through the high stone lattices creates a NATURAL MELODY. MUSICIANS open and close shutters on the lattices, dance in front of the openings, turning the temples into giant pipe organs. DRUMS and WOODWINDS add to the music.

-- the Chief presses strange foods on Tulio and Miguel. They avoid the boiled tapir, the giant lizard with an apple in its mouth.

-- VILLAGERS dance and cavort, a mix of Cirque du Soleil and Stomp. JAGUAR and EAGLE SOLDIERS act out their animal totems. Tzekel-Kan watches, but stays aloof from the festivities

-- Tulio takes a bowl of pulche from the Chief, sips it -- not bad. He passes it to Miguel -- SHUDDERS as the drink kicks in, grabs the bowl back, drinks some more.

-- Lucero does dressage maneuvers, his own form of dancing. A VILLAGER makes a horse mask from a rolled palm frond and two bananas for ears. Uses two canes to mimic a horse's front legs. Others follow, and Horse dancers join the Eagles and Jaguars.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

-- Tulio watches the dancers -- and is shocked when one of the Jaguar dancers BECOMES a JAGUAR, a flickering, 'did-that-really-happen?' moment.

TULIO
Did you see that?

Miguel's face is hidden as he drinks from a really huge bowl of pulque. He lowers it --

MIGUEL
See what?

Tulio points. An Eagle dancer becomes an EAGLE, swooping around the square. Miguel gasps with delight, applauds. Tulio takes the pulque bowl from him, downs a huge gulp.

-- Miguel stands, plays his guitar. The festivities come to a silent halt. Miguel keeps playing, picking up the melody of the stone lattices. A DRUMMER nods his head in a beat, jazz-style, joins in. Other musicians follow. The sound of the Spanish guitar blends beautifully with the music of the city. The dancers move again, a slightly different tempo --

-- Tulio drains the bowl of pulche, spots an OCELOT (similar to a bobcat) slinking through the crowds. It DISAPPEARS from sight, and then he sees CHEL, in an ocelot mask. Then she is obscured and the ocelot REAPPEARS. The timing leaves us wondering if Chel <u>is</u> the ocelot, or that there may be a real ocelot wandering through the celebration.

Chel crouches down, her face at table level. She nonchalantly grabs a bite of food, but she's clearly focused on some goal.

-- Miguel has attracted a crowd of bobby-soxer MAYAN CHICKS. Still strumming, he moves down the steps into the crowd (think Elvis in 'Speedway').

(Here Miguel sings his English interpretation of the repeated lyric: CEL-A-BRATE GOOD TIMES COME ON! IT'S A CELEBRATION! his version alternating with the Mayan. We're starting to blend the two languages.)

-- Tulio sees what the ocelot is stalking: a TOUCAN. He drops the pulche bowl, staggers toward the bird -- startling the Toucan, who flutters away. Chel slaps the ground in anger, yanks off her mask, turns --

CHEL
You idiot --

She sees who she's addressing -- and drops her forehead to the ground. (Italics indicate words spoken in Mayan.)

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

CHEL (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Schloatl.

Tulio takes her arm, pulls her to her feet.

TULIO
Oh, stand up. Hey -- you're her!
From the jungle --

When Chel stands, food and small ornaments fall from where she had hidden them in her dress. Tulio looks down at them, back at her, speculatively. Chel would really like to leave.

CHEL
I beg your forgiveness --

TULIO
Exactly why were those guys
chasing you?

She tries to gently remove his hand from her arm, one finger at a time.

CHEL
If you'd just let go of my arm --

(Note: Tulio could sing a version the following lines, blending in with the background chorus. This is the place for the initial 'You Don't Understand Me at All' song suggested by Tim.)

TULIO
You really can't understand me,
can you?
(a little drunk)
So ... if I were to tell you
something like ... oh, I don't
know, you're so hot, you make the
inside of my eyelids sweat, you'd
have no idea what I said -- which
is true, by the way.

CHEL
That look in your eye probably
means the same in a god that it
means in a man -- only more so.

Over his shoulder, she spots Eagle soldiers peering at her suspiciously, moving closer. She pulls away from Tulio.

CHEL (CONT'D)
I've got to go!

TULIO
Wait! Was it something I said?

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

CHEL
(in ENGLISH)
Please, let go of me!

Tulio, shocked that he understands her, lets go of her arm. She darts away, disappears into the jungle. Tulio tilts his head -- did she just speak English?

(Now subtly, without fanfare, the villagers sing the English line: CEL-A-BRATE GOOD TIMES COME ON! IT'S A CELEBRATION! The switch should be natural, almost unnoticed -- but now hundreds of Mayans are chorusing in English.)

-- Tulio can't believe his own ears. He stops a native --

TULIO
Hey, can you understand me? Give me your drink.

The native does so happily, moves on. Not conclusive enough for Tulio. He stops another native.

TULIO
I like your hat.

The native sets it on Tulio's head. A pretty native woman goes past. Tulio stops her, whispers in her ear. She slaps him in the face.

TULIO
Okay, this is weird ...
(rubs his chin)
And yet strangely familiar.

The song reaches a fever pitch. Tulio rejoins Miguel. Miguel is swigging from a gourd. Both are roaring drunk.

TULIO
I've got a great idea!

Miguel looks over at Tulio -- and BREAKS UP LAUGHING.

POV - MIGUEL: A big TULIO-RAT holds up his cup of pulque.

TULIO-RAT
After we find the gold, let's steal the recipe for this stuff!

Miguel throws an arm around him (he's human again). PULL BACK, as dancers swirl around them, flickering between human and animal shapes.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

MIGUEL
We found Paradise! The gold'll be a snap!

They clink gourd and cup, and drink, as we continue PULLING BACK, the city a riot of color and movement --

38 INT. TEMPLE - MORNING 38

CLOSE ON: Tulio, asleep.

MIGUEL (O.S.)
Wake up, Tulio.

Tulio opens his eyes. On his chest is a SMALL DOG. Panting, looking at him with one of those drippy dog-grins.

TULIO
Miguel?

MIGUEL (O.S.)
Time to get up.

Tulio looks over -- Miguel's hangover is as bad as Tulio's.

MIGUEL
(indicates Attendant in doorway)
He says we've got to go to some ceremony.

TULIO
A ceremony?
(panicked)
I didn't engaged last night, did I?

ATTENDANT
We have captured an ungodly criminal. You must stand in judgement.

MIGUEL
Tulio -- I don't want to 'stand in judgment' of anyone.

TULIO
If not us, then who? Now, should I be a vengeful, wrathful god or a kind and benevolent god?

He goes outside. The sun sears his eyes. He screams in pain.

39 EXT. CEYNOTE WELL - DAY 39

The Attendant and Miguel walk up a long flight of stairs. Tulio crawls on hands and knees.

MIGUEL
I don't think gods are afraid of heights.

TULIO
Haven't these people ever heard of handrails?

AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS, there is a platform with a big double-backed throne. Miguel and Tulio sprawl into it.

TULIO
Well, the gods are on time. Where's everyone else?

The Chief and Tzekel-Kan arrive, see the guys on the throne.

CHIEF
I beseech you, O gods -- squooch over a little.

The guys squooch over, The Chief sits. There's no room for Tzekel-Kan. Chief claps his hands. An Attendant brings out a little folding camp stool. Tzekel-Kan glares at him. He takes camp stool away. Tzekel-Kan stands regally.

CHIEF
All right... Let's play ball!

TZEKEL-KAN
The ceremony of reckoning is begun!

The Attendant blows on CONCH SHELL. Miguel and Tulio react in hungover pain. The giant stone snake-head of the CEYNOTE WELL grinds open in a marvel of primitive hydro-engineering.

TZEKEL-KAN
We must first pay proper tribute to the gods.

TULIO
(disingeniously)
Tribute? For us?

MIGUEL
Aw, you shouldn't have ...

People ceremoniously carry GOLD tribute to the ceynote

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: 39

TULIO
(wipes away a tear)
Miguel -snif- this is the happiest day of my life.

The people drop the tribute into the well.

TULIO
AAUGH!

He freezes, mouth open, eyes wide, hands clutching. Miguel straightens him back up.

MIGUEL
It's all right, Tulio -- there's more where that came from. I hope.

CHIEF
The tribute awaits youse gods in the other world.

MIGUEL
Thanks a lot for sending it on ahead.

TZEKEL-KAN
Bring forth the prisoner!

The Attendant blows the conch again. Miguel and Tulio reel.

MIGUEL
Do you <u>have</u> to do that?

There is a RUMBLE. A giant stone forked snake's tongue emerges from the well --

-- and Chel stands on the tongue, held by two guards.

CHEL
Let me go! You've got the wrong thief -- er, girl!

MIGUEL
It's her! From the jungle!

TULIO
Time to rethink that damsel-in-distress theory.

MIGUEL
Well, she's still in distress.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: 39

TZEKEL-KAN
Lowborn woman known as Chel. You are accused of thievery. You have stolen what is meant only for the nobles: Jade. Gold. Onyx. Silver. Chocolate.

CHEL
(shrugs innocently)
I was hungry.

TZEKEL-KAN
And you have gathered sacred quetzal feathers -- without waiting for them to molt.

CHEL
I would never do such a thing --

The Attendant whips out two PLUCKED QUETZALS. A woman faints.

CHEL
-- ever again. I promise.

TZEKEL-KAN
Your punishment will be merciful
(beat)
You will be thrown in the Ceynote, where you will drown, travel to the other world and serve the gods.

CHIEF
LET'S PLAY BALL!

The guards try to shove Chel into the Ceynote. She holds herself out with her toes.

MIGUEL
We have to do something!

TULIO
Why? Isn't there enough happening already?

MIGUEL
HOLD IT!

A buzz of confusion. The Chief raises a hand -- he wants to hear what Miguel has to say. Tzekel-Kan glares at him.

MIGUEL
Um ... that doesn't seem all that merciful ...

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: 39

TZEKEL-KAN
We could set her afire.

CHIEF
(nods)
A crowd pleaser.

MIGUEL
No!

TZEKEL-KAN
I am the speaker for the gods. I know the laws and punishments --

MIGUEL
You don't speak for me!

This is a big moment. Tzekel-Kan is stunned, outraged. The crowd goes silent. The Chief's ball bounces down the stairs. Chel is shocked -- but then she looks at Miguel with hope.

CHIEF
Lord Quetzalcoatl -- It's your call.

MIGUEL
Uh ...

CHEL
Hey! I have an idea!

They look at her. The Guards are now at each tip of the forked tongue; Chel is held between them, dangling, nothing but air between her and the water.

CHEL (CONT'D)
I could <u>not</u> be thrown in the Ceynote, <u>not</u> drown, and -- here's the best part -- just start serving the gods right now.

MIGUEL
That's a good idea --

Tulio pulls Miguel to one side.

TULIO
(to the crowd)
Excuse us. The gods need a private moment.
(a hiss, to Miguel)
Don't make waves. They'll kill us if they find out we're fakes.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: 39

MIGUEL
But -- she can help us!

TULIO
How? She's a thief!

MIGUEL
Right -- who better to lead us to the gold?

TULIO
That's true ... if we can trust her ...

MIGUEL
She'll owe us her life.

TULIO
Not a bad incentive.

MIGUEL
C'mon, Tulio -- we can't let her die.

TULIO
Okay.
(to Attendant)
I have an announcement.

The Attendant starts to blow the conch shell -- but Tulio plugs it nonchalantly with his thumb.

TULIO (CONT'D)
We, Schloatl and Quetzacoatl, proclaim to thee that from this day forward, in perpetuity in all the known universe, the woman named Chel shall henceforth enter into servitude to serve us as our ... ah ... servant. Our will be done. Amen

The throng blinks. Waiting for something.

MIGUEL
Right.

The throng CHEERS. Tulio's a little perturbed that he needed Miguel's rubber stamp. Chel shakes off the soldiers -- then bows low to Miguel and Tulio.

MIGUEL
(shouts)
LET'S PLAY BALL!

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: 39

The Chief smiles wide. Everyone CHEERS. Tzekel-Kan scowls, whirls, storms off.

40 INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT 40

Chel is awed by the temple's sumptuous appointments. ATTENDANTS lay out a sumptuous feast.

CHEL
This is incredible -- this is all yours? All that food -- just for you? Is that chocolate?
(tries some)
Mm. Mm-mm.

She takes some more. A lot more.

TULIO
Hey -- we don't need a food-taster.

She smiles at him, sprawls into a chair. Reacts to the comfort of it, stretches sensually.

CHEL
Ooh. Oh, my.

Tulio and Miguel are both watching her closely. Very closely. Sweating a little.

CHEL (CONT'D)
This is the most comfortable chair I've ever sat in.

She stretches again. Tulio grins, glances at Miguel -- who's grinning, too. Tulio doesn't like that look, glares at Chel.

TULIO
We don't need a seat-warmer, either.

CHEL
(sharp)
What?
(sweet again)
Oh. Of course, but ... you know, I had a really hard day. Getting arrested ... facing death ...
(genuinely reverent)
Meeting gods ...

MIGUEL
Sure. That can be very trying.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

CHEL
Tell me. All I want to do now is take a bath and get some sleep.

MIGUEL
We can get hot water.

CHEL
Really?

MIGUEL
Sure. We're gods. I'll go see to it --

TULIO
Miguel!

MIGUEL
What?

TULIO
She's our servant, Miguel.

MIGUEL
So? That means we should treat her like she's beneath us?

TULIO
Yes!

Miguel scowls at Tulio. Glances back at Chel, who gives him a little wave. He grins, waves back -- but Tulio grabs his arm, drags him to the other side of an archway.

TULIO
Listen, Don Juan -- we saved her so she could lead us to the gold. Remember?

MIGUEL
I know! All right? She's beautiful, don't you think?

She's inspecting one of the robes. It doesn't meet her standards. As Miguel and Tulio talk, she looks over the furnishings. Considers stealing a fetish (decides against it -- grudgingly).

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

TULIO
This always happens. You meet some milkmaid, put her on a pedestal, treat her like a princess -- and then get all upset because she smells like cows.
(re: Chel)
She's a thief. A crook. A feather-plucker.

Miguel appraises him for a moment.

MIGUEL
I saw her first.

TULIO
What?

MIGUEL
I saw how you were looking at her. I saw her first.

TULIO
Well, I guess that means you have dibsies.
(makes it clear)
I'm. Not. Interested.
(beat)
And, for the record -- I saw her first.

Miguel points an accusing finger.

MIGUEL
AH, HA!

Eye-to-eye, Tulio and Miguel regard each other.

TULIO
Please, Miguel -- This one time. Don't do this.

Miguel glances over at Chel, as does Tulio. She's looking at her reflection in a piece of polished quartz. Lifts her hair from her neck, checks how it looks. Unintentionally(?) sexy.

TULIO
She's trouble.

MIGUEL
Yeah ... Trouble.

TULIO
She's got to be off-limits.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

MIGUEL
To both of us.

TULIO
To both of us.

They shake. Duck back under the archway, back to Chel. Arms crossed -- they're united, firm. Taking no guff.

MIGUEL
I'm not going to draw you a bath.

TULIO
You're our servant.

MIGUEL
You'll carry out our wishes.

Chel is immediately contrite, prostrates herself.

CHEL
Forgive me, my lords. I didn't mean to offend you --

Tulio tries to pull her to her feet. She goes right back to prostrate. They both try. She goes right back to prostrate. A Jack-in-the-box kinda thing.

TULIO: No, that's all right --
CHEL: I'm just a mortal! I don't know how to behave around gods --
MIGUEL: Don't worry --
CHEL: Please don't throw me out
TULIO: We're not throwing you out --
CHEL: I'm sorry, I just wanted a bath --

Miguel and Tulio finally just get down so they're at floor-level with her.

MIGUEL: If you want a bath, you should have one --
CHEL: I'm unforgivable!
TULIO: We forgive you.

Chel looks up at him.

CHEL
Really?

TULIO
Of course --

MIGUEL
Sure.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

Chel dries her eyes. Lets them help her up.

CHEL
I only want to do your will.

TULIO
That's all we want, too.

Chel spots one of the temple attendants.

CHEL (CONT'D)
(authoritatively)
You! The gods command you -- Draw a bath for me. And bring some food: mangoes, bananas -- and more chocolate!

The SERVANT scurries to do her bidding. Chel is satisfied.

CHEL (CONT'D)
Is that as you wished, my lords?

MIGUEL
I guess so ...

TULIO
Approximately.

CHEL
Very good. Well, if you need me, I'll be in the tub.
(She saunters out)

MIGUEL
I'll check on you in a few minutes --
(Tulio slaps his arm)
Never mind.

TULIO
Okay, here's the plan. Tomorrow, I'm going with her to find the gold. And you're going to stay here.

MIGUEL
But --

TULIO
Now, now. I'm delivering you from temptation.

MIGUEL
All right. But what am I going to do all alone?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

TULIO
Oh, you know. God stuff.

(MUSIC NOTE - Tim has earmarked the villain's song for this sequence -- although we would nominate to hold off his main song until sequence 17 where he takes action, and let this scene serve as Tooth & Nail's intro, as Tzekel-Kan tries to divine the future of the city.)

41 INT. TZEKEL-KAN'S TEMPLE - NIGHT 41

Tzekel-Kan strides in, seething with anger. The temple is smoke-filled. Starlight through dozens of windows. A statue of TEZCATLIPOCA, god of darkness and sorcery. Flanked by two gigantic STONE JAGUARS. A stone column in the center of the room. A pole with a crossbeam juts up from it.

TZEKEL-KAN
This is not right! The gods have always spoken through me!

Tzekel-Kan grasps a TALL, THORNY PLANT with the finger-and thumb-tips of both hands, PRICKING them. He holds his hands over a bowl of pulche, simmering on a brazier. TEN DROPS of BLOOD mix with the water, turn it PINK.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
Only my guidance can keep this city from ruin and damnation.

He lifts a long, wriggling CENTIPEDE from a jar. For a moment, we're sure he's going to swallow it -- and then he drops it into the pulche bowl. The mixture turns BLACK.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
Left to their own devices, the people would have forsaken the sacred ways long ago.

He dips his hands into the mixture, coats his forearms black, then lifts the bowl.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
Quetzalcoatl is not the only god. They all demand worship.
(he drinks)
Obeidence.
(drinks more)
Sacrifice. Their thirsts have been sated -- because of me.

He DRAINS the bowl greedily, fluid spilling down his chin.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: 41

TZEKEL-KAN
And now -- am I to be cast aside?

As he speaks, he CASTS ASIDE his robe. His body is covered with TATTOOS. A BAT across his shoulder blades. A TWO-HEADED SNAKE wrapped around his torso. PIRANHA wind up and down his legs. Runes and patterns fill the spaces in between.

TZEKEL-KAN
What need be there for a priest, if the gods can speak for themselves?
(beat)
Unless ...

ONE OF THE SNAKE TATTOOS OPENS ITS EYES. This is TOOTH. From his chest, the tattoo-snake SPEAKS, finishing Tzekel-Kan's sentence smoothly.

TOOTH
(declarative)
-- they aren't really gods.

Tzekel-Kan nods thoughtfully. There's a mural on a wall, a dark, stylized version of Quetzalcoatl descending to earth. A PRIEST stands over a human sacrifice, holding a heart aloft.

TZEKEL-KAN
The prophecies do foretell of Quetzalcoatl's arrival ... but not now.

In the mural's sky, there is a representation of a SOLAR ECLIPSE. Three DISCS: one a FIERY SUN. The next HALF-FIERY SUN, HALF-BLACK. The last a BLACK DISC.

TZEKEL-KAN
Not until the shadow swallows the sun ...

The other tattoo snake head, NAIL, becomes 3-DIMENSIONAL.

NAIL
We <u>think</u> -- but is it written in stone?

TZEKEL-KAN
It is <u>all</u> written in stone.

TOOTH
Most holy -- they are frauds.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: 41

As the snakes argue, they become living creatures in steps. Each transformation is accompanied by a RIPPING sound as the snake pulls free of Tzekel-Kan's torso.

NAIL: They fulfill the prophecy --
TOOTH: No, they don't --
NAIL: They might!
TOOTH: They won't!

Tooth headbutts Nail. Nail CRIES: "OW!" -- but the down-snap of Nail's head sets up a wave-effect in their shared snake body, which comes around, causes Tooth's head to whip-crack. Tooth CRIES: "OW!" Nail snickers. Tooth glares at him.

Tzekel-Kan touches them under their chins, looks from one to the other.

TZEKEL-KAN
I am of ... two minds on the subject.

TOOTH
They are pretenders. Kill them. I insist.

NAIL
But if they are gods, they won't die -- and they'll be pissed.

TZEKEL-KAN
The city has been set on an unfamiliar path. I must know where it leads ...

Tzekel-Kan whips the snake around the pole in the center column. They twine around it (like a medical caduceus). Tzekel-Kan sights along the crossbeam of the pole. One of the odd-shaped windows frames a particular STAR.

TOOTH
The answers lie ...

NAIL
In the night, in the skies ...

THE TEMPLE SEEMS TO DISSOLVE. Tzekel-Kan continues to sight the STAR, but now he, the column and Tooth & Nail stand in the NIGHT SKY ITSELF. Surrounded by stars. A comet is frozen in flight.

The STAR moves. Tzekel-Kan is startled, scowls. He re-sights on the STAR. It moves again. He tries to keep the crossbeam targeted on it -- but it keeps moving. And then ALL THE STARS begin to move, faster and faster, WHIRLING AROUND THEM.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: 41

NAIL
Death! I see death!

TOOTH
You always see death.

NAIL
It's true! Tzekel-Kan will die!
(beat; hedging)
... eventually.

TOOTH
I won't hold our breath.

Tzekel-Kan snaps the crossbeam in frustration.

TZEKEL-KAN
Our fate matters not; only the fate of the city. We have invoked by night, by blood and flesh ...

He raises a fist, uncurls his fingers. In the palm of his hand are a half-dozen BLEACHED WHITE BONES.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
Now we summon by bone --

He casts the bones out --

42 EXT. CITY - NIGHT 42

The city is a ruin, how it would look in our day and time. Overgrown, the stone aged and crumbling. And the landscape is littered with HUGE WHITE BONES, almost dwarfing the temples in size. WIND echoes mournfully.

Tzekel-Kan's tiny figure stands among the bones (along with the column, Tooth & Nail still twined around the pole.)

TOOTH
Empty ...

NAIL
Abandoned ...

TZEKEL-KAN
No one is left to hear the wind
...

He touches one of the bones -- it CRUMBLES --

43 INT. TZEKEL-KAN'S TEMPLE - NIGHT 43

-- and THEY'RE BACK INSIDE THE TEMPLE as if they never left. But they are all shaken by what they saw.

NAIL
Everyone was gone, to Xibalbá and the void --

TOOTH
You must destroy the strangers -- before the city is destroyed!

TZEKEL-KAN
If they are not gods. But if they are, I cannot contest their will. What to do?
(turns from Tooth to Nail)
What to do?

Tooth and Nail wrap around a the pole again, speaking rapid-fire, each climbing up over the other, like kids going hand-over-hand on a baseball bat to see who will get to bat first.

NAIL: Look before you leap --
TOOTH: He who hesitates is lost --
NAIL: The snare waits for the prey --
TOOTH: Nations fall while kings sleep --

TOOTH/NAIL
Better safe than sorry!

They look at each other, shocked that they have actually agreed on something. Tzekel-Kan considers.

TZEKEL-KAN
I will treat them as gods -- for now. But I will keep watch on them. And I shall even pay them tribute ...

Tzekel-Kan brings his hands together. On the back of each hand is half of a large TARANTULA-LIKE SPIDER, the legs running the length of each finger, the thumbs intertwining to make the head and pedipalps. He wriggles his fingers --

NAIL
(sotto, to Tooth)
This always makes me sick to our stomach ...

Tzekel-Kan grimaces in pain as the TARANTULA becomes 3-DIMENSIONAL, accompanied by WET POPPING, RIPPING sounds.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED: 43

TZEKEL-KAN
(re: the spider)
... a tribute of poison. Enough to appease any god ... and kill any man. And then I will know.

The spider almost seems to grin, mimicking Tzekel-Kan.

TOOTH
Excellent plan.

NAIL
Aw ... I was going to say that.

44 EXT. CITY - DAWN 44

Tulio and Chel ride on a litter, past cleaning and touch-up crews. Painters with four brushes on a pole re-paint four identical designs at a time. A worker brushes the teeth of a snake-head sculpture.

CHEL
Is there a particular place you wish to go, lord Schloatl?

Bringing up the rear is Lucero, borne on his own litter, the bearers struggling under the weight. It's too small for him; he overhangs it in all directions.

TULIO
Oh, you know ... local points of interests, the riches of the city --
(slips it in a quick)
-- the secret golden temple --
(back to nonchalance)
-- that sort of thing.

CHEL
Secret golden temple?

TULIO
Yeah. You know -- where the gold is kept. For the tribute. I'd like to know where it is. Make sure its safe.

CHEL
You don't know? I thought the gods know everything. Don't they?

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: 44

TULIO
Once you tell us everything, I will. Gods don't always work in mysterious ways.

CHEL
You're -- you're going to go back to the other world?

TULIO
Oh, yeah.

CHEL
When?

TULIO
(explains it carefully)
After we find the secret temple. And then things can get back to normal around here.

Chel is genuinely shocked. She hadn't thought about this. They are moving past --

The CEYNOTE WELL. Chel gives it a horror-stricken glance. Looks down, trying to figure out what to do. An idea occurs. She gives a sidelong look at Tulio, calculating.

CHEL
If you want to see riches -- I know where to go.
(to the litter bearers)
The *kiuic* -- immediately.
(*Kiuic*: KEY-week)

The bearers make a quick turn -- up a flight of stairs. Behind them, Lucero's bearers groan, struggle to keep up.

45 EXT. MARKETPLACE - MORNING 45

The market is crowded with buyers, sellers and barterers. Fruits and vegetables, exotic meats, snakes in cages, a barber cutting hair, toys, pottery, blankets, honey, stalls of colorful clothes -- it's a Mayan mall.

CHEL
All the riches of the city pass through the *kiuic*.

She hops off the litter before Tulio can speak --

CHEL (CONT'D)
Come on!

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: 45

Tulio has no choice but to hurry after her.

CHEL
Would you like some honey?

TULIO
(turns)
Some what, sugarpie? -- oh.

Chel is there, holding a honey comb, one eyebrow cocked at him. Tulio takes it. She licks some honey off her hand. Tulio shakes off the sight of that, samples honey from the comb.

She heads off. Tulio eats some more honey -- and a bee emerges from the comb. Startled, he swats at it. It gets mad -- and SEVERAL MORE BEES emerge. Tulio scrambles back --

ON CHEL, checking out robes. IXMOL swats her hands away.

IXMOL
Hands off, lowborn! If one of these disappears, I'll know who to blame.

CHEL
I'm not a thief anymore, woman -- I'm servant to the gods!

She points at Tulio, who is frantically avoiding bees and swatting at them with his ice-cone. They both watch him.

IXMOL
What is he doing?

Chel's not sure herself, but she's not gonna let Ixmol know.

CHEL
Dancing.

IXMOL
Dancing?

CHEL
Yes. Dancing -- the dance that summons a horrible, lingering death people who are rude to the gods favorite servant.

Ixmol rethinks her position. She reaches for a large statue -- then decides instead on a smaller one. She hands it to Chel.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: 45

IXMOL
(eyes lowered)
Here -- take this. With my compliments to Lord Schloatl.

CHEL
I think Lord Schloatl would prefer that one -- and that and that and that and that --

46 INT. TEMPLE - DAY 46

Miguel sits slouched in his throne. Plays a couple notes on his guitar, sets it aside. He's bored.

Peeking over the steps of the pyramid are DOZENS OF FACES -- all staring at the god.

MIGUEL
It'd be nice to have a better view.

Instantaneous action: the Attendant claps -- the DOZENS OF PEOPLE converge on the throne and LIFT it -- Miguel grabs the sides as it lurches up and out --

OUTSIDE, the throne is set down in a new spot. Miguel has a great view. The people stand there expectantly, waiting for Miguel's next command.
He stares at them, considering.

MIGUEL
This has ... possibilities.

And then he smiles. Everyone smiles back at him.

NEW ANGLE -- as TZEKEL-KAN'S SPIDER slips down a web, slides into the shadow of a rock crevice. He stares out at Miguel, watching, waiting ...

47 EXT. CITY - DAY 47

Tulio and Chel ride in a skiff, poled by workers, piled high with Chel's freebies. Lucero is a following skiff, also piled high.

TULIO
(contemplating the bunny cup)
This isn't exactly what I meant when I said riches.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 47

CHEL
But look! The little ears are drinking straws!

Tulio gives her a deadpan look -- then something else catches his eye --

Beside the canal, stoneworkers work on a huge carving. They are daredevils, with no apparent fear of heights.

TULIO
Those guys are crazy!

CHEL
I was to marry a stonecutter, once.

TULIO
Really? Was he crazy?

CHEL
Oh, no. He was a good man ... but a bad stone cutter. Afraid of heights. For courage, he would drink. One day, he had a little too much ... 'courage'...

Together, they visually trace the 'fall' from the top of the scaffold to the ground.

TULIO
Guh.

CHEL
Tzekel-Kan said the gods demanded his blood. I said the gods were stupid.
(looks sidelong at Tulio)
The, uh, <u>other</u> gods, of course.

TULIO
Of course.

CHEL
Tzekel-Kan stripped me of my status and property. So, now, to survive ... I do what I must.

TULIO
Hey ... a girl's gotta make a living.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 47

Chel realizes Tulio completely understands and empathizes with her. They gaze at each other, a bit too long. Chel looks away first, spots something --

CHEL
Look! Tribute. As you asked.

A carver works on a stele. It's of Quetzalcoatl, Lucero -- and a small, large-headed, big-mouthed rat-man.

CHEL (CONT'D)
This stele depicts your arrival in the city.

TULIO
Oh, yeah?
(looks it over)
Well ... okay, that's Miguel -- Quetzalcoatl ... and that's Lucero ...
(peers close; suspicious)
Who's that supposed to be?

CHEL
That's you, lord Schloatl.

Tulio gapes, outraged.

TULIO
That's me? That's what I look like to you?

CHEL
It's a very good likeness.

Tulio stares at it. Lucero wanders up behind him, regards the stele over his shoulder.

TULIO
(to Lucero)
What do you think?

Lucero squints at the stele, then at Tulio. Gives him a 'it's you' nod of the head.

TULIO (CONT'D)
No wonder Miguel gets all the great women.

48 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY 48

The thatched hut suburbs, alive with day-to-day minutiae. Cooking, cleaning, washing. Children run past Chel, who is leading Tulio and Lucero through on foot.

CHEL
Children are the true treasure of our people.

TULIO
But hard to melt down and make into coins.
(he's exasperated)
Listen, Chel. I want to see the gold. Okay? Specifically: gold.

CHEL
(downcast)
So you can leave.

TULIO
Yes! Is there a problem with that?

She looks away from him.

CHEL
(genuine, not vamping)
But what will happen to me?

Tulio's brow furrows. He realizes he hadn't considered that. It's not a question he knows how to answer --

There is a long, loud FLUTE NOTE. People look up from their everyday tasks. The note is repeated, and everyone hurries toward the jungle, smiling and laughing. Chel looks around, suddenly overjoyed --

CHEL
The harvest!

TULIO
What harvest?

She runs off. He goes after her.

49 EXT. JUNGLE - DAY 49

There are dozens of people -- men, women and children -- in the jungle, in the trees, harvesting something into baskets. Chel's watching them as Tulio and Lucero catch up.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: 49

CHEL
It's been so long since I have been allowed to join the harvest ...

Tulio gazes at her as she gazes wistfully at the harvesters.

TULIO
Well, you're not a thief anymore. Go on. Harvest your brains out. Schloatl the rat-faced god decrees it.

She looks at him, elated. Gives him a spontaneous and genuine hug and peck on the cheek --

CHEL
Thank you!

TULIO
Wait! What are you harvesting?

But she's already too far away to hear. He strokes his beard.

TULIO
(to Lucero)
Whatever it is, its gotta be pretty valuable ...

People run from bushes to trees, gathering small white puffballs. Tulio can't quite figure it out.

Chel, in a field, waves for him to 'come on.' He shakes his head, gestures 'no thanks.'

A STRAPPING YOUNG MAN starts gathering puffballs beside Chel. Tulio raises an eyebrow. Several more STRAPPING YOUNG MEN congregate nonchalantly around her. Tulio frowns.

Chel's picking puffballs off where they cling to branches. ANOTHER FIGURE beats her to one. She looks up --

It's TULIO. He smiles at her, goes back to harvesting.

Several large men shake a tree. Puffballs rain down. Caught in the wind, the delicate puffballs float along -- children run to catch them in baskets.

One large tree the men can't shake. Lucero takes charge. He KICKS the tree. A DELUGE OF PUFFBALLS. Everyone cheers and laughs and gathers puffballs.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: 49

Chel and Tulio spot a bush full of puffballs. They run for it. Chel pulls ahead. Tulio CATCHES the back of her dress and pulls. She tumbles. He beats her to the bush, triumphantly looks back. She climbs to her feet -- and spots a HUGE LEAF heavy with water. She pulls the branch, and the water pours down on Tulio.

Lucero trots from tree to tree, kicking loose puffballs. Dozens of children follow him, gathering them up.

Now the villagers are out in a large open clearing, spreading the puffballs like seeds. Villagers bring forth a HUGE ROLLED BLANKET of DELICATE FEATHERS. They unroll it across the field of puffballs. Tulio and Chel help.

And then the villagers step back ... and wait.

TULIO
Now what?

CHEL
You'll see.

TULIO
Is this a good harvest?

CHEL
Oh, yes.

TULIO
So how much is it worth?

CHEL
(perplexed)
Nothing.

TULIO
Nothing? Then -- what did we do it for?

Someone calls out. Several villagers point at the blanket. There are tiny movements beneath it. The villagers grab the edges. As one they lift and snap the blanket --

The blanket catches the breeze and undulates away across the tree tops --

And HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF BUTTERFLIES RISE UP. They swarm into the air, color taking wing, leaving behind their cocoons (the puffballs). They swirl around the villagers, who dance and run among them.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: 49

Tulio stares up in delighted awe. Chel grabs his hand and swings him out among the butterflies -- and then he swings her -- and then she swings him --

Lucero is covered in butterflies, indignant. He shakes, and the butterflies clear off him -- and then immediately flock back on, inundating him again.

Chel and Tulio must holler to be heard over the laughter and screams of delight.

CHEL
I'm sorry, Lord Schloatl!

TULIO
Why?

CHEL
We didn't find your gold!

TULIO
There's always tomorrow. And call me Tulio! That's my name.

CHEL
Tulio Schloatl?

TULIO
Tulio H. Schloatl. But Tulio will do.

CHEL
Very well ... Tulio.

They smile at each other. A CLOUD of butterflies sweeps between them. They watch with the villagers as the butterfly flocks swarm up into the air, across the jungle, light from the SUNSET playing off their wings.

50 EXT. CITY - NIGHT 50

Chel, Tulio and Lucero head toward the main pyramid.

TULIO
That was amazing! I can't wait to tell Miguel --

He pulls up short. The three of them stare at --

A half-completed TEMPLE. It's at ground level, a majestic stone STABLE. Adorned with STONE HORSES in the style of the serpents at Chichén Itzá.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: 50

Tulio, Lucero and Chel exchange glances. Tulio heads up the pyramid -- realizes there's a HANDRAIL going up the stairs.

TULIO
Looks like Miguel's got a few things to tell me.

51 INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT 51

Tulio stares. The temple is filled with STATUES of MIGUEL as Quetzalcoatl. Life-sized ones, half-sized ones, a table of garden-gnome sized ones. Tulio feels uncomfortable --

He turns slowly -- staring in through an arch, is a HUGE MIGUEL FACE, half-finished. Tulio jumps back with a yelp.

MIGUEL (O.S.)
Pretty neat, huh?

Miguel is standing there, smiling.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
Did you see, Lucero? Your very own temple.

Lucero whinnies, bobs his head in approval. Miguel picks up one of the little statues.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
The sculptors said everyone would want their very own Quetzalcoatl.
(moves the statue as it 'speaks')
'Bless you.' 'Bless you.' 'Go forth and multiply.'

He grins at Tulio. Tulio is not amused.

TULIO
Chel. Excuse us please.

She realizes there's no room for argument.

CHEL
Yes, Tulio.
(to Miguel; re: the little statue)
May I have one?

MIGUEL
Oh, Of course. Here --

He hands the statue to her magnanimously. She bows and exits.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: 51

MIGUEL
'Tulio'?

TULIO
We're supposed to be keep a low profile. Remember?
(points at the big head)
That is not low! That's high! And very big!

MIGUEL
Tulio -- I tell them to do stuff, and they do it! And I didn't forget about you. You saw the handrails?

TULIO
(grudgingly)
Yes. Thank you.

MIGUEL
And look -- here's your statue.

There's another table of little Schloatl statues. Miguel displays one: it's rat-faced head is ridiculously oversized. Tulio examines it. Miguel taps the head. It bobs on a spring like one of those baseball mascots.

TULIO
Miguel. We're only doing this god thing until we find the gold. You're not supposed to --

MIGUEL
Did you?

TULIO
Did I what?

MIGUEL
Find the gold.

TULIO
Um ... not exactly.

IN THE CORNER: TZEKEL-KAN'S TARANTULA squeezes its fat furry body out of a crack. Pauses, takes its bearings --

52 INT. TZEKEL-KAN'S TEMPLE - NIGHT 52

Tzekel-Kan opens his eyes. And then opens more. And more. His face is ringed by a spider's multi-eyes. Nail shudders.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: 52

NAIL
This always weirds me out.

Tzekel-Kan moves his joined hands and fingers like a spider. CLOSE ON HIS MULTI-EYES --

53 INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT 53

POV: THE TARANTULA, everything at a weird, skewed spider-eye-view angle. The wall skitters past as it moves toward Miguel. UNDER THIS:

MIGUEL
Well, what were you doing all day -- with Chel?

TULIO
(a bit evasive)
Looking.

MIGUEL
With Chel, or <u>at</u> Chel?

TULIO
With Chel --
(pretending disgust)
And she wasn't much help.

He takes off his robe -- a couple of butterflies flutter out. Lucero watches them fly up -- past the TARANTULA. Lucero scowls at it, snorts. OVER THIS:

MIGUEL
Oh. Too bad. So you probably aren't going to want her help tomorrow.

TULIO
Well, it's a pretty big city.

MIGUEL
I can see that. From up here.

TULIO
Oh, sure ... but, uh, I still need her.
(beat)
Help.

MIGUEL
You're falling for her.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: 53

TULIO
No. Nah. No. No.

The tarantula gathers itself, preparing to leap --

54 INT. TZEKEL-KAN'S TEMPLE - NIGHT 54

Tzekel-Kan grins in anticipation, his fingers poised --

55 INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT 55

The tarantula leaps --

Lucero WHINNIES and charges, knocks Miguel aside into a Miguel statue. The tarantula misses him. The statue knocks over another, which knocks over another and another and another like dominoes --

Tulio and Miguel whirl, not sure what's going on --

Lucero's after the tarantula, hooves tattooing down as the tarantula runs and evades --

56 INT. TZEKEL-KAN'S TEMPLE - NIGHT 56

Tzekel-Kan's fingers work like crazy --

57 INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT 57

The tarantula finds refuge under a table. Lucero can't get at him, although he keeps trying --

58 INT. TZEKEL-KAN'S TEMPLE - NIGHT 58

Tzekel-Kan breathes a sigh of relief -- and then he panics and looks up --

59 INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT 59

The tarantula is looking up in horror --

THE LAST MIGUEL STATUE falls toward the table and SMASHES through it --

-- the TARANTULA barely skitters out of the way in time. Breathes a spider's sigh of relief --

Lucero's hoof SLAMS down, CRUSHING it.

60 EXT. CITY - NIGHT 60

Favoring Tzekel-Kan's temple as the priest's BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM splits the night --

61 INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT 61

The SCREAM echoes, fades away. Tulio and Miguel both look around, then at each other, not sure what the hell that was. And then without missing a beat:

MIGUEL
I think you are falling for her.

Lucero whinnies and points with a hoof at the crushed spider on the floor. Tulio takes the opportunity to get out --

TULIO
Stupid horse! What were you thinking? Now, c'mon. Let's go check out your new temple. And then it's time to hit the hay. Ha, ha -- the hay, get it? Big day tomorrow, looking for gold and all. Goodnight, Miguel!

UNDER THIS: Tulio's almost dragging Lucero out as Lucero keeps trying to point to the statue and then they're out the door and gone.

Miguel stares after Tulio, suspicious and a little angry.

62 INT. TZEKEL-KAN'S TEMPLE - NIGHT 62

Tzekel-Kan holds his crushed hands, in pain. But his teeth are gritted in anger.

NAIL
Ooh -- that had to hurt him.

Tzekel-Kan throws himself to his knees in front of the Jaguar statues, throws out his arms, throws back his head -- and begans a WAILING CHANT.

ANGLE ON - TOOTH & NAIL. Their eyes go wide. OFF-SCREEN there is the sound of GRINDING STONE.

TOOTH
Not as much as he's gonna hurt them.

63 EXT. TEMPLE - NIGHT 63

Chel is on the far side of the temple, sitting on the edge, bathed in moonlight. Miguel finds her. Studies her.

MIGUEL
Beautiful.
(off her look; nods at the sky)
The stars.

CHEL
Oh ... yes. They're lovely.

MIGUEL
('aw, shucks')
Thanks.
(beat; sincere)
But you put 'em to shame.

Chel can't help but smile.

IN THE ARCHWAY -- Tulio steps out. Spots the two of them together. Fades back into the shadows, watching them.

CHEL
Tulio says that one day, you two will return to the other world.

MIGUEL
Not necesarily. This world has a ... certain appeal.
(he means her)
Your city seems like paradise.

CHEL
I suppose you know all about paradise.

Miguel moves close to her; he's really turning on the charm.

MIGUEL
I know one thing: in paradise ... anything can happen.

Pretty devastating. Chel catches her breath. Hey, he's kind, he's handsome, and he's a god.
IN THE ARCHWAY, Tulio drops his head.

CHEL
I never thanked you for saving my life. Twice.
(she touches his hand)
Thank you.

Miguel raises Chel's hand to his lips, kisses it.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: 63

MIGUEL
You're welcome.

Miguel pulls Chel closer. Caught up in his eyes, she moves into his embrace, anticipating --

IN THE ARCHWAY, Tulio scowls. Grabs a mango from a bowl -- too small. Tosses it aside, grags a melon, cocks his arm, ready to go after Miguel --

-- But Chel pushes back from Miguel.

CHEL
No! It is forbidden for a god and a mortal to be together.

He puts the palm of his hand against her cheek.

MIGUEL
I'm Quetzalcoatl. I unforbid it.

She puts her hand over his -- then pulls his away.

CHEL
No ... I can't. I know the stories. When a mortal falls in love with a God, it always ends badly --
(beat)
At least for the mortal.

Miguel scowls. He doesn't like the sound of that --

A sudden, distant SCREAM breaks the night. And then another. Chel, Miguel and Tulio all look in the direction it came from, alarmed -- then move --

64 EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT 64

Miguel, Chel, Tulio and Lucero move into the circle of light created by torches. Men hold spears; mothers protect their children. Two WITNESSES make a report to the Chief. No matter how frantic the first is, the second always one-ups him.

WITNESS 1: There were two jaguars --
WITNESS 2: Giant jaguars!
WITNESS 1: They killed the watchmen --
WITNESS 2: Ate them! In one bite!
WITNESS 1: It was the most horrible thing I've seen in my whole life!
WITNESS 2: Me, too -- and I've lived longer!

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED: 64

Witness 1 gives Witness 2 a dirty look. The Chief hoists his spear, gestures 'follow me' to his warriors.

TZEKEL-KAN (O.S.)
Your weapons will not stop the monsters.

The crowd parts to let Tzekel-Kan through.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
They were sent by Balaam, the Jaguar God. He has spoken to me. He asks for appeasement. Three sacrifices.

He swings a GNARLED, WITHERED hand out -- the Chief frowns at it -- and points at THREE CHILDREN (the ones who brought Lucero the hearts). Tulio and Miguel are shocked -- but its Tulio who speaks up first.

TULIO
No!

Lucero whinnies, moves in front of the kids protectively.

TZEKEL-KAN
Blood is the mortar of the city. Balaam demands it.

TULIO
Well, tell Balaam tough luck.

MIGUEL
Schloatl is right. There will be no more sacrifices.

The villagers go silent. All attention on Tzekel-Kan.

TZEKEL-KAN
And you will protect us from the wrath of the other gods?

Miguel tries for a little more confidence than he feels.

MIGUEL
... yes.

TZEKEL-KAN
Very well.
(to the village)
The monsters sent by Balaam shall be destroyed by Quetzalcoatl!

Tulio and Miguel confer privately.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED: 64

TULIO
This stinks like a set-up.

MIGUEL
Jaguars are just cats. Right?

TULIO
Big cats, Miguel.

MIGUEL
I've got to try --

TULIO
'Try?' 'Try' means you might fail. Gods don't fail. That's what makes them gods.

Villagers bear a stretcher past. Carrying one of the WATCHMEN. A woman moves alongside, holding his hand, WEEPING. Miguel looks at Tulio.

MIGUEL
Then I won't fail.

He grabs a bladed club from a warrior, leaps atop Lucero.

MIGUEL
I ride to kill the jaguars!

CHEERS from the people. Lucero rears, and leaps forward, disappears into the foliage.

Tulio stares open-mouthed after him. Shakes his head. He's got no choice. He heads into the jungle. A beat; he returns, grabs a spear and shield from a warrior, and leaves again. Chel grabs an obsidian knife and follows.

Tzekel-Kan smiles over steepled, gnarled fingers.

65 EXT. JUNGLE - NIGHT 65

Silent. Scary. Moonlight through the jungle canopy. Miguel, on Lucero, leads. Tulio's next, hanging onto Lucero's tail. Chel hangs onto Tulio's pony tail.

MIGUEL
I don't see 'em.

CHEL
Maybe we scared them away.

TULIO
Oh, yeah, that's likely.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: 65

MOVEMENT beyond the trees, a shadow racing past. A BIG shadow. The party spins toward it --

And then another SHADOW whips by between them and the CAMERA, obscuring them. It passes --

Tulio and Chel are now up on Lucero's back, hanging onto Miguel. Lucero looks back at them, disgruntled.

There's a RUSTLE from the jungle. They turn, look -- SLOW PUSH IN on the foliage, the darkness beyond -- Miguel, Tulio, Chel and Lucero peer into it --

-- A PAIR OF FELINE EYES OPEN. Really huge, a couple feet apart at least. Miguel blinks.

MIGUEL
That's a lot closer than I want it to be --

TULIO
Or a lot bigger.

CHEL
Or both.

She's right. The JAGUAR EXPLODES FROM THE FOLIAGE, and it's huge, bigger than Lucero. The horse spins, gallops full tilt away, the Jaguar lunging after him --

THE SECOND JAGUAR leaps into the path in front of them -- Lucero skids, cuts away to avoid its slashing claws --

Miguel swings his club at the jaguar -- the club SHATTERS. Miguel looks at the broken handle in dismay.

MIGUEL
What are these things made of?

Lucero tears through the jungle. The JAGUARS shove aside trees following. Huge PAWS hammer the ground --

Lucero gallops through shallow water at the edge of a river, spray lit by moonlight. The JAGUARS crash after him. Miguel, Tulio and Chel glance back --

The Jaguars are gaining, running through shafts of moonlight. They are stone, Mayan carvings come to deadly life.

TULIO
They're made of stone!

CHEL
There's a bridge ahead!

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: 65

An immense log bridges the river. Lucero leaps onto it. The Jaguars pursue. The log CREAKS -- SPLINTERS -- BREAKS --

Lucero leaps to safety on the far side. The Jaguars hit the fast-moving river, sink like stones. They're gone.

Miguel, Tulio, Chel and Lucero gape at the river -- then break into celebration.

TULIO: Who's the god?
MIGUEL: You're the god!
TULIO: No, you're the god!
MIGUEL: We're the gods!

Chel pats Lucero's neck.

CHEL
You're the god, too.

FROM ABOVE, beneath the water, the Jaguars stalk along the river's bottom toward the bank they stand on --

MIGUEL
Told you, man. You gotta have a little faith in me --

-- the Jaguars EXPLODE out of the water --
-- Lucero wheels and runs, the Jaguars after them --

TULIO
(to Miguel)
This is why people become aetheists!

CHEL
Aren't you going to fight them?

Tulio just flings his spear back over his shoulder. And then he does the same with his shield.

TULIO
Happy?

Lucero slams on the brakes, slides to the edge of --

-- a DEEP RAVINE. MOLTEN LAVA flows through it, an offshoot of the distant volcano. Lucero stares down. Miguel peeks over Lucero's neck --

MIGUEL: Shit.

Tulio peeks over Miguel's shoulder --

TULIO: Shit!

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: 65

Chel peeks over Tulio's shoulder --

CHEL: Uh-oh!

Tulio and Miguel look at her; she shrugs. From behind them, trees CRASH down and foliage shakes.

CHEL
Gods can fly. Can't they?

Miguel and Tulio look at each other: 'If only we could.' Miguel leaps down.

MIGUEL
You guys get to safety. I'll lead them away --

TULIO
You won't make it.

MIGUEL
Do you have a better idea?

Tulio scowls -- but he doesn't seem to.

NEW ANGLE -- THE JUNGLE, as TREES get SMASHED OVER and the jaguars pounce out of the brush, snarling. They spot --

Miguel. He stands alone, in front of a tall tree at the edge of the lava ravine. He looks really unhappy.

The Jaguars exchange stone-tooth grins, then charge at him --

Lucero BURSTS from behind the tree, the end of a vine in his teeth. The vine goes high up over a branch, down to Miguel's waist -- and Miguel is YANKED UP into the air --

-- barely out of the way as the JAGUARS SLAM into the tree. It shudders, toppling backwards --.

Tulio and Chel pop up from behind bushes. They have a single vine, NOOSES at either end. They throw the nooses around the tails of the Jaguars, tying them together --

-- the Jaguars try to climb the tree after Miguel. The tree TILTS -- FALLS toward the ravine. Halfway up the tree, Miguel scrambles for a handhold, riding it down --

The top branches of the tree SLAM DOWN on the far side of the ravine. Miguel barely hangs onto the newly-formed bridge --

-- dangling high over the molten lava.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: 65

Jaguar #1 leaps onto the log. Jaguar #2 starts to follow. Jaguar #1 turns back, stares at him ('Remember what happened before?') Jaguar #2 gingerly removes his paw, steps back. Jaguar #1 stalks out toward Miguel --

Miguel scrambles back. He leaps down onto the far side of the ravine. He's on a narrow ledge, not a lot of room to run. Jaguar #1 stalks toward him, coils to leap --

Chel darts out of hiding, gets Jaguar #2's attention --

CHEL
Hey! Over here! A nice, tasty woman! Mmmmmmm.

TULIO
(beside her now)
And slow! With a bad leg!
(Chel limps around a little)
Look!

With a SNARL, Jaguar #2 springs toward them --

-- just as Jaguar #1 leaps toward Miguel --

The vine between the two Jaguars GOES TAUT. Jaguar #1 falls short of the ravine, clutches the edge --

Jaguar #2 is yanked backwards, away from Chel, toward the ravine. A surprised look; it SNARLS, claws the dirt --

Jaguar #1 swipes at Miguel, stone claws CUTTING into his side -- Miguel makes himself as thin as possible -- Jaguar #1 claws after him --

-- pulling Jaguar #2 farther, yanking it toward the edge. The two side walls of the ravine suddenly GIVE WAY, rocks, log, jaguars, and MIGUEL all plummet toward the LAVA --

Tulio and Chel gasp --

-- the VINE is yanked out of Lucero's mouth --

The Jaguars SPLASH into the lava. The log hits, bursts into flames --

-- Lucero scrambles after the vine --

Miguel plunges down -- and then the vine around his waist goes taut with a jerk and he swings, arcing just INCHES above the boiling lava. He slams hard into the ravine wall --

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: 65

Lucero strains, the vine in his teeth. He hauls Miguel up. Tulio and Chel pull Miguel up over the edge.

TULIO
You okay?

MIGUEL
Next time, I'll think of the plan and you be bait.

TULIO
Next time.

Miguel, Tulio, Chel and Lucero look down into the lava. THE JAGUARS snarl and fight, sinking, melting, the colorful stone swirling into the deep reds and oranges of the molten lava.

66 EXT. VILLAGE - DAWN 66

TZEKEL-KAN
... and so it came to pass that the Gods left the city, forever --

A CHEER goes up as Miguel on Lucero, Tulio and Chel trailing, come into the village. Tzekel-Kan sees them --

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
(recovering smoothly)
-- to be remembered upon their return as ...
(he hates saying it)
... saviors.

The Chief bows low to the party. The villagers follows his lead -- and then so does Tzekel-Kan.

Miguel climbs down off Lucero -- and gasps. He pulls aside his sliced-open shirt --
Chel's eyes go wide. Tulio follows her gaze --

Miguel is BLEEDING. Chel's staring in shock.

TULIO
(sotto; frantic)
Miguel! Blood. Red. Right there.

The Chief rises, as does Tzekel-Kan and the villagers --

TULIO
(a hiss)
Stop bleeding, will you?

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 66

Tzekel-Kan spots the blood. So does the Chief and some of the villagers. Murmurs of 'Blood.' 'The god bleeds.' Chel acts fast. She uses her knife to cut her own shoulder --

TZEKEL-KAN
Gods do not bleed. Mortals bleed.

Chel throws herself at Miguel, her blood smearing with his.

CHEL
Thank you, Quetzalcoatl! You've saved us! Thank you!

Tulio's quick on the uptake. He pulls Chel away.

TULIO
Chel! Come on -- look at that! You got more blood on Quetzalcoatl. That's never gonna come out.

CHEL
Oh, dear -- I beg forgiveness, my lord.

MIGUEL
It's all right.
(looks at Tzekel-Kan)
Blood is the mortar of the city.

He holds Tzekel-Kan's gaze -- until the Chief and the villagers sweep him up in a joyous procession. Amongst the hullabaloo, Tulio whispers to Chel --

TULIO
Thank you.

CHEL
(she's having none of that)
Talk. Now.

She strides into the jungle. A beat, and then Tulio follows.

67 EXT. JUNGLE - MORNING 67

Chel confronts Tulio.

CHEL
He was bleeding!

TULIO
Just a little --

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 67

CHEL
He's not a god!! He's a man!

TULIO
Why, that lying son of a -- those beady little eyes, that should've been a tip-off --

CHEL
Stop it! This whole time I've been terrified I was falling in love with a god -- and you're not gods at all!

The 'falling in love' causes Tulio to brighten -- but then another consideration occurs.

TULIO
Wait -- which god?

CHEL
What are we going to do? If anyone finds out --
(horrified)
If Tzekel-Kan finds out -- we'll be killed.

TULIO
It's Miguel, isn't it?

CHEL
Do you have any idea what this means?

TULIO
(downcast; sure)
It is Miguel. It's always Miguel.

CHEL
It means we don't have to waste any more time.

She kisses him hard, knocking him flat on his back. He's surprised -- but receptive.

TULIO
(really happy)
It's me.

They kiss again, part. Chel looks into his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 67

CHEL
I'll show you what you want to see.
(Tulio beams)
Where the gold comes from.

TULIO
Oh, the gold. Of course. I knew that.

68 INT. OLMEC RUINS - DAY 68

A torch FLARES to life. Chel holds it up, lighting their surroundings for Tulio:

It's a small, ruined section of an ancient temple (blockier, more primitive architecture than our city) nearly reclaimed by the jungle. Tulio's attention is immediately drawn to --

-- a beautiful FEATHER ROBE and HEADDRESS, draped on a statue. Materials (feathers, dyed fabrics Chel has stolen) scattered about. Tulio examines the robe.

TULIO
Did you make this?

CHEL
I always dreamed of being a great robemaker. Foolish.

TULIO
I'd say you are a great robemaker.

Chel smiles broadly, a little embarrassed. Tulio takes note of bedding, Chel's meager belongings.

TULIO
You live here?

CHEL
This is a forbidden place. Very holy. Who would look for a thief here?

Tulio notices a single OLMEC HEAD (about chair-sized).

TULIO
At least you have company.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: 68

CHEL
(nods)
The ancient ones sometimes speak through them ... it is said they reveal great truths.

TULIO
Yeah?
(to the head)
Hey! Where's the gold come from?

The Head seems to answer:

CHEL (O.S.)
(her voice low)
The gorgeous woman knows.

Tulio starts -- realizes it was Chel. She smiles, jerks her head 'this way,' and leads him into darkness.

69 INT. OLMEC TEMPLE 69

They come down a flight of stone steps into a vast, ruined chamber. Eroded stone, overgrown. The primary motif is GIANT STONE HEADS. Some cracked, crumbled. One half-submerged. But still regal, mystic. Tulio takes it all in.

TULIO
(hushed)
Wow. Big heads.
(beat)
What is this place?

CHEL
Once, this was a fabulous city. A place of wisdom and peace. And great wealth.

TULIO
Like your city.

CHEL
(an 'are you nuts' look)
No. This was a paradise.

Tulio examines a scowling stone head.

TULIO
(re: the scowl)
Huh. You'd think they'd look happier. What happened to 'em?

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: 69

CHEL
No one knows. They vanished long ago ... long before our city existed.

TULIO
Oh come on -- whole cities don't just disappear --

Unseen by Tulio, a STONE HEADS SPEAKS (possibly a spirit form 'face' appears superimposed over the unmoving stone).

HEAD
Truly do we live on earth?

TULIO
(to Chel)
Knock it off. It wasn't funny the first time.

CHEL
It wasn't me.

She points at the Head. It speaks again.

HEAD
Truly do we live on earth?

Tulio's jaw drops. He grabs Chel's arm, backs toward the exit.

TULIO
Well, time to go. --

Chel stops, stopping Tulio as well.

CHEL
When the ancients speak, the smart thing to do is listen.

TULIO
(an excuse)
I uh, I thought they were talking to you.

He doesn't like it, but he stays, looking around nervously. Chel waits calmly. And then another HEAD speaks.

HEAD
Not forever on earth; only a little while here.

SECOND HEAD
Although it be jade, it will be broken,

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: 69

BROKEN HEAD
Although it be gold, it is crushed,

ERODED HEAD
Although it be quetzal feather, it is torn asunder.

ALL HEADS
Not forever on earth; only a little while here.

'Only a little while here' echoes through the chamber, dying away. Chel looks at Tulio, who stands transfixed, amazed at what he has just seen. And heard.

TULIO
Great. Thanks. I'll keep it in mind.
(sotto, to Chel)
How about you show me the gold and then we'll get the hell out of here, okay?

CHEL
(gestures around the chamber)
This is it. This is where the gold came from.

TULIO
Where? Here? There's no gold here.

CHEL
Not anymore. The ancients found the riches of the earth. We came, and took it for our own.

She turns, starts to lead them out. Tulio stares at her, open-mouthed.

TULIO
But -- that was my plan!

He follows her. Their DIALOGUE plays OVER the action: Tulio trails Chel up a flight of stone steps, through Chel's living area, and out through the vines hanging across the entrance to the Olmec ruins --

TULIO: So there's no gold?
CHEL: No.
TULIO: None?
CHEL: No.
TULIO: There's no city of gold? No temples of gold?
CHEL: No.
TULIO: No unbelievable treasure troves of gold?
CHEL: No.
TULIO: *(hopeful)* A gold mine? There's a gold mine?
CHEL: No.
TULIO: There's no gold at all?
CHEL: No!

70 EXT. OLMEC RUINS - SUNSET 70

They're outside now --

TULIO
No gold.

He paces angrily.

TULIO (CONT'D)
We come all this way, nearly die -- a couple times -- Miguel's going nuts -- big friggin' heads from a dead civilization are talking to me -- and there's no gold.

Tulio looks out, notices something, laughs bitterly. He indicates the view: the LIGHT OF SUNSET hits the CITY just so, turning it into a CITY OF GOLD.

TULIO
That's the closest I'm ever going to get to El Dorado ...

Chel steps in front of his view of the city.

CHEL
It is rare for the ancients to speak. Did their words have meaning for you?

TULIO
Yeah. The usual. 'You were born a poor man, and you'll die a poor man.'

CHEL
Oh.
(beat)
What will you do now?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: 70

Tulio looks at her. She is standing there, beautiful, the golden city behind her -- but he doesn't see it.

TULIO
I don't know. I don't know anything anymore.

He pushes past Chel, into the jungle, back toward the city. Chel looks after him, concerned, follows.

ABOVE THEM, a bat hangs from a tree branch. It takes wing, fluttering into the sky --

(MUSIC NOTE: In this sequence, Tzekel-Kan seduces Miguel into thinking he is in fact a god, the savior of the city. With Tzekel-Kan finally taking action, it's a scene that is potentially done even stronger and more efficiently in song. Possibly a reprise of the villain's song from sequence 12, or the villain's song could be placed here instead.)

71 EXT. SKY - NIGHT 71

The bat wings through the city, to Tzekel-Kan's temple --

72 INT. TZEKEL-KAN'S TEMPLE - SUNSET 72

Tzekel-Kan sits cross-legged on the floor, eyes closed, his robe off. Tooth and Nail are crossed as well, mirroring Tzekel-Kan's legs.

The bat flies into the temple, over to Tzekel-Kan's back, where it lands -- and FLATTENS, becoming a tattoo again. Tzekel-Kan opens his eyes wide in gleeful realization.

TZEKEL-KAN
They are pretenders. Mortals. One of them has even fallen in love.

TOOTH
(to Nail)
Told you so.

NAIL
Okay, you were right. Can we let it go?
(to Tzekel-Kan)
What will you do?

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: 72

TOOTH
(casually keeping the rhyme)
Killing them would be apropos ...

TZEKEL-KAN
Yes -- but the city believes them to be gods. What faith could a priest command, if gods can die?

UNDER THIS, Tzekel-Kan takes a couple insects from a jar. He crushes them; RED fluid runs into a bowl.

NAIL
You must engineer their fall from grace -- and from favor.

TOOTH
Then you will be the city's savior.

TZEKEL-KAN
(smiles)
Yes. No one will care if two men die ...

Tzekel-Kan stirs the bowl with a PAINT BRUSH. When he lifts it, it drips RED ...

73 INT. TEMPLE - NIGHT 73

Two men stand before Miguel, eyeing each other resentfully.

MIGUEL
Let me see if I've got this straight. You paid him to fix your roof. And you haven't done it yet.

CONTRACTOR
It's been raining!

HUT OWNER
I know. There's a big hole in my roof!

Miguel holds up a hand for silence.

MIGUEL
(to the contractor)
You must be allowed to finish the work on your own schedule.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 73

The Contractor smiles triumphantly; the Owner's face falls.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
Until then, the two of you will trade huts.

The Contractor's face falls; the Owner smiles triumphantly. Miguel waves the two out.

TZEKEL-KAN
Well done. Wonderfully wise.

Tzekel-Kan stands to one side, holding a CODEX in both hands.

MIGUEL
(pleased with himself)
It was, wasn't it?

TZEKEL-KAN
I would expect no less. You are indeed the bringer of light, chosen to lead the city.

Miguel is surprised, doesn't quite buy it.

MIGUEL
You think so?

TZEKEL-KAN
I know it to be true.

He leans forward suddenly -- Miguel flinches back into his throne -- but Tzekel-Kan is BOWING.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
Forgive me, Lord Quetzalcoatl, for ever doubting you. I deserve your harshest punishment. What part of my body shall I cut off?

MIGUEL
Geez -- none! You're forgiven.

TZEKEL-KAN
It is as the prophecies foretell!

He unveils a large CODEX, laying it across the floor. It is a spectacular, detailed mural of the history of Quetzalcoatl. He 'reads' from it:

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
'He shall render fair judgment unto all the people.'

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 73

MIGUEL
Yeah? It says that?

TZEKEL-KAN
Oh, that, and much more.

Tooth & Nail emerge from Tzekel-Kan's robes, startling Miguel.

TOOTH
'Quetzalcoatl shall arrive in the city on a wondrous beast.'

NAIL
'By his golden beard you will know him as the Lord of Light and Peace.'

MIGUEL
Uh ... your snakes are talking.

TZEKEL-KAN
Trifling magic, my lord. Nothing compared to your greatness.
(reads)
'Quetzalcoatl shall show mercy to the lowest born.'

TOOTH
Only you could be so benevolent.

TZEKEL-KAN
'Quetzalcoatl shall slay the monsters called forth by Balaam the Jaguar God.'

He traces the codex, 'reading' it. Unnoticed by Miguel, Tzekel-Kan's finger comes away WET with RED PAINT.

NAIL
You did that, too. And you were magnificent!

Tzekel-Kan surreptitiously wipes his finger off on Miguel's robe. Miguel studies the codex, astonished at a particularly accurate drawing.

MIGUEL
The does look like me.

TOOTH
A pale representation of your true grandeur.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 73

NAIL
(re: the drawing)
A five-year-old could do better.

Tzekel-Kan gives him a sidelong scowl, but continues on:

TZEKEL-KAN
And once you have married, you will lead this city into a golden age unrivaled --

MIGUEL
Whoa, whoa, back up the cart! I'm not getting married.

Tzekel-Kan, Tooth & Nail freeze. Exchange a glance.

TZEKEL-KAN
Of course you are.

MIGUEL
No, I'm not.

Tzekel-Kan, Tooth & Nail exchange another glance, and then pore over the codex.

TOOTH
(reading)
'Lord Quetzalcoatl shall save the life of a lowborn woman, grant her immortality, and make her his eternal wife.'

NAIL
Right there. See?

TZEKEL-KAN
'In this way does Quetzalcoatl become complete and joined to the city.'

TOOTH
Divine and Human ...

NAIL
Man and Woman.

MIGUEL
'The lowborn woman' -- you mean Chel? I'm supposed to marry Chel?

TZEKEL-KAN
Of course Chel.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 73

MIGUEL
Maybe marriage wouldn't be that bad ...

TZEKEL-KAN
(insinuating)
Where is Chel, by the way? I haven't seen her.

MIGUEL
Oh, she's out somewhere with Schloatl.

TOOTH
Lord Schloatl?

NAIL
Uh-oh.

Nail's gaze drifts to the codex, then quickly away.

MIGUEL
What uh-oh? What about Schloatl?

TZEKEL-KAN
It's nothing. A footnote, really. It's just --

TOOTH
He will betray you!

MIGUEL
No. No way. He'd never betray me.

NAIL
He'll try to steal your intended away from you!

That hits Miguel hard. He looks back at the codex.

MIGUEL
Really.

TZEKEL-KAN
He'll <u>try</u>. He will even, ha ha, this is rich, he will attempt to seduce her by telling her he is <u>mortal</u>.

He gestures to an illustration: Tulio and Chel, his arms wrapped around her like serpents. Miguel stares at it.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 73

MIGUEL
Really.
(under his breath)
So much for off-limits.

TZEKEL-KAN
But, of course, since you are Quetzalcoatl, you know all this.

MIGUEL
What? Oh. Of course. Sure.

TZEKEL-KAN
Shall I begin the preparations for your wedding?

Miguel is still brooding over Tulio and Chel. Without looking up from the codex:

MIGUEL
We can't fight destiny, can we?

TZEKEL-KAN
No, my lord. Wonderfully wise.

With a smile at Tooth & Nail, he exits, leaving Miguel alone.

74 EXT. JUNGLE - STREAM - MORNING 74

Tulio and Chel, holding hands, reach the bank of a quiet stream. Tulio kneels, cups his hands to get a drink of water. As he sips, the water settles --

REFLECTED in the stream is an apparition: AN ARMORED MAN. Tulio looks up --

Across from him is a SPANISH SOLDIER, also kneeling to drink. He notices Tulio and Chel at the same time they notice him. They stare at each other in shock --

The Soldier, in full armor, looks completely alien to Tulio (and to us), out of place in the world we've come to know.

And to the Soldier, Tulio and Chel are a bizarre sight.

Tulio recovers a bit, raises his hand in greeting --
The Soldier raises his RIFLE --
Tulio's eyes go wide -- he WHIRLS and grabs Chel --
Good thing, 'cause the Soldier FIRES --

The bullet shreds a leaf as Tulio and Chel run --

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: 74

(MUSIC NOTE: This sequence, the falling out scene between Miguel and Tulio, has been earmarked for a song.)

75 EXT./INT. TEMPLE - DAY 75

Tulio and Chel reach the top of the pyramid, still in a hurry. Tulio is completely winded.

TULIO
(breathing too hard to form sentences)
... leave .. gotta --

CHEL
I'll get ready to leave.

TULIO
(still panting)
... Miguel --

CHEL
You go get Miguel.

Tulio nods. Holding his side, he limps toward the throne room. Chel hurries toward her quarters. Behind her --

TZEKEL-KAN looms out of the shadows. Smile like a knife blade, he follows her.

76 INT. TEMPLE - DAY 76

Tulio bursts in, still breathing hard. Miguel sits on the throne, getting his feet massaged.

TULIO
Miguel ... soldiers! I saw ... Cortes' soldiers ...

He collapses against the throne, sucking wind.

MIGUEL
Oh. You're back.

TULIO
We have to get ... <u>everyone</u> out of here!

Miguel stands (he doesn't give the foot massager any warning). He gazes imperiously out over the city.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: 76

MIGUEL
(beat)
You go. This is my city. I will gather my army. If Cortes comes ... he will face my power.

Tulio looks at him slack-jawed.

TULIO
HEY! Hello? We're talking Cortes here! Soldiers. Guns. Cannons. Remember?

MIGUEL
He is no match for Quetzalcoatl.

TULIO
And if Quetzalcoatl shows up, I'll be right there to hold his coat. But you aren't him.
(enunciates every word)
It. Was. A. Scam. That I had to talk you into!

MIGUEL
I've seen the prophecies. You had nothing to do with them. And they're about me.

TULIO
No, they're not.

MIGUEL
Really? Let's take stock, shall we? Quetzalcoatl will have a golden beard.
(points at his beard)
Huh? Huh? Who spared Chel from the ceynote pit. Why, me! And the sun -- the sun came up this morning, didn't it?

TULIO
Oh, I think it could have managed just fine without you.

MIGUEL
(leans in close)
Are you sure?

Tulio is speechless; he just stares at his friend -- who is unrecognizable to him.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: 76

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
And ... I have been betrayed by Lord Schloatl.

TULIO
What are you talking about?

MIGUEL
Chel.

TULIO
(a whisper)
What?

MIGUEL
You left me here alone -- so you could have her to yourself! You said she was off-limits!
(the final nail)
You told her you were mortal.

TULIO
How did you know --? ... actually, she figured it out herself ...

Miguel just glares at him. Tulio looks away, ashamed.

TULIO (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Miguel. Chel and I -- we didn't mean for it to happen. But ...
(beat)
I love her. I've never felt like this before.

Miguel's face is impassive -- he has all the confirmation he needs.

MIGUEL
Score another one for the prophecies.

TULIO
Do the prophecies say I'm going to pop you one in the mouth if you don't shut the hell up about the prophecies?

MIGUEL
No. They say I am going to marry Chel. And they are right.

Tulio stares at him.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: 76

TULIO
(low)
She'll never marry you. I won't let it happen.

MIGUEL
(pityingly)
Do you really think you have any say in the matter?

Tulio's eyes go wide -- and then he SWINGS at Miguel. Miguel blocks it easily -- their eyes lock -- and then he PUNCHES Tulio, sends him sprawling. He stares down at Tulio in contempt. Tulio looks up, blood trickling from his split lip.

TULIO
We aren't gods!

MIGUEL
You're right. We. Are not.

He turns away, looks back out over the city.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
Lucero must be prepared for the ceremony.
(snaps his fingers)
See to it.

Tulio glares. This is the ultimate insult; he's angry, now. Speechless, he whirls and leaves.

A flicker of sadness crosses Miguel's face -- but then he resumes his godly mien.

77 INT. TEMPLE - CHEL'S QUARTERS - DAY 77

Tulio stalks into Chel's quarters.

TULIO
(muttering angrily)
I'm not gonna be his stable boy. And no way I'm gonna be his best man.
(calls out)
Chel!

Chel is being dressed and made-up by several FEMALE ATTENDANTS. Chel is STONED OUT OF HER MIND. A feather from her head dress flops back down between her eyes. She looks at it cross-eyed --

POV: CHEL -- Her double-vision view of Tulio in the doorway.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

Chel beams, hurries to him -- and steps hard off the stool she forgot she was standing on. She whirls, kicks the stool aside -- then resumes beaming and hurrying to Tulio.

CHEL
Tulio -- look!
(displays her robes)
Pretty, huh?

TULIO
Come on, Chel. We're getting out of here.

CHEL
Good! Right after the wedding.

TULIO
We'll get married later -- after we -- What?

CHEL
Not to you. Quetzalcoatl.

TULIO
But -- you love me. Don't you?

CHEL
Uh-huh. You have the most comfortable chair I ever sat in. But I can't disobey the will of the gods.

TULIO
We aren't really gods!

CHEL
Shhhhhhhhhhhhhh!
(a too-loud whisper)
It'll be our secret! If anyone finds out, you could get killed.

TULIO
Please ... Chel. I love you.

CHEL
But ... I'm going to marry Lord Quetzalcoatl.
(a single nod)
It was prophesieded.

Tulio stares at her. Chel gathers up a feather wedding cape to show him.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

TULIO
(to himself)
It's Miguel.
(he turns away)
It's always Miguel ...

Chel turns back holding the cape, watches Tulio leave the chamber. The realizes he has left. Her face falls.

CHEL
When gods and mortals fall in love, it always turns out badly.

TZEKEL-KAN (O.S.)
Now you understand --

He is standing beside her.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
-- the necessity of laws.

He puts a paternalistic arm around her. Offers her a bowl.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
More pulche, child?

Chel's still looking sadly after Tulio. She takes the bowl, and drains it.

78 EXT. CITY - DAY 78

Tulio is at the bottom of the pyramid, a bag of supplies hung from a strap across his forehead (native-style). He gives the pyramid a last look -- then turns resolutely for the jungle.

79 INT. TEMPLE - DAY 79

Miguel is dressed by several ATTENDANTS in God-like finery. We hear muffled DRUM BEATS coming from outside, somehow sinister in tone.

80 EXT. TEMPLE - DAY 80

Drummers beat out the rhythm of the city. Jaguar and Eagle Soldiers perform a weapons drill-dance (similar to the Filipino martial art kalee).

81 INT. TEMPLE - DAY 81

Miguel ceremoniously dons his head dress.

82 EXT. TEMPLE - DAY 82

The population of the city crowd the square. A sense of building anticipation.

83 INT. TEMPLE - DAY 83

TRACKING FROM BEHIND, (a la 'The Last Emperor') Miguel steps out into the sunlight --

84 EXT. TEMPLE - DAY 84

STILL TRACKING FROM BEHIND, Miguel sees the city before him, the people crowding the square. A cheer GOES up.

NEW ANGLE, on Miguel as he smiles.

TRACKING FROM BEHIND AGAIN, Miguel moves forward to the edge of the pyramid, the stairs now visible to him (and us) --

A STONE ALTAR three-quarters of the way up. Strapped to it, in her wedding robes, is CHEL. Tzekel-Kan stands next to her, smiling. He spreads his arms in a welcoming gesture.

Tooth and Nail are positioned at the head of the altar, swaying ornamentation. Miguel's jaw drops.

NAIL
Look at that. Quetzalcoatl seems to falter.

TOOTH
He's shocked to see his wife-to-be waiting <u>on</u> the altar.

Miguel moves toward Chel and Tzekel-Kan, confused. Still drugged, Chel's head lolls to the side. She smiles at Miguel.

MIGUEL
What is the meaning of this?

CHEL
(drugged, uninhibited)
<u>Nice</u> robe.

TZEKEL-KAN
Lord Quetzalcoatl shall be wed today!

The crowd cheers.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED: 84

TZEKEL-KAN
It is written -- the bride of Quetzalcoatl will be sacrificed, and he shall resurrect her! Made immortal, she will rule alongside him forever!

He ceremoniously extends an obsidian knife across Chel to Miguel. Chel stares up at it, becoming aware of her situation. Lucero's eyes go wide. He knows this is wrong.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
You <u>can</u> resurrect her, can't you, Lord Quetzalcoatl?

MIGUEL
Uh ... No -- I mean, uh ...
(grasping at straws)
Presto! It's done. She's immortal!

CHEL
Thank you, Quetzalcoatl.

TZEKEL-KAN
But -- you must take her life, and then return it. The prophecies are clear.

MIGUEL
The prophecies are wrong!

The crowd falls silent. The Chief scowls. Lucero glances around sensing unease. Tzekel-Kan and Miguel play out their argument to the crowd.

TZEKEL-KAN
But -- we believed you to be Quetzalcoatl <u>because</u> of the prophecies. If they are wrong ... then so are we.

MIGUEL
No -- I <u>am</u> Quetzalcoatl. My word is final --

TZEKEL-KAN
(addresses the crowd)
The prophecies say this wedding shall take place in the darkness at midday! When the shadow swallows the sun!
(he points to sky)
Behold!

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED: 84

In the sky, the sun disc has a bite taken out of it -- and the shadow of the eclipse continues to flow across it.

CHEL
Uh-oh.

Miguel stares up at the sky, eyes wide -- he's as amazed as anyone, and more than a little frightened.

TZEKEL-KAN
The prophecies speak true! Now ...

He raises the knife above Chel in a two-handed grip.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
Prove yourself to be Quetzalcoatl -- or prove yourself to be false!

NAIL
This is great! It's magnificent!

TOOTH
He's doomed if he does and doomed if he doesn't!

Tzekel-Kan raises the knife blade. The shadow of the eclipse climbs the temple steps, throwing all into the darkness. Only the firelight of the braziers illumines the scene. Miguel stares at the knife.

MIGUEL
(out of the corner of his mouth)
Tulio, what are we going to -- dyeeghh ...
(of course, Tulio isn't there)

The disc of the sun is completely subsumed -- Tzekel-Kan brings the knife DOWN --

MIGUEL
NO!

He leaps forward, grabs Tzekel-Kan's wrists. They struggle. The knife STABS DEEP into Miguel's side. Miguel gasps. He yanks it out, tearing it away from Tzekel-Kan, and hurls the knife away.

TZEKEL-KAN
Hear me, my city! BEHOLD THE FALSE GOD!

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED: 84

The Chief shakes his head sadly.

CHIEF
Aw ... I liked him.

(MUSIC NOTE: Tzekel-Kan is now in charge. The city is his. This is a possible place for a reprise of his song, as he consolidates his power, exerts his control.)

Soldiers overwhelm Miguel and Chel. Lucero charges up toward them. Several men throw loops around his neck. He shakes them off, fighting hard.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
We have offended the true Quetzalcoatl! It is he who has taken away the sun!

In the temple, people shove the big Miguel head to the edge. It ROLLS DOWN THE STAIRS --

More men rush Lucero. He sees the Head tumbling down the steps. He leaps ATOP IT as it reaches bottom, and log-rolls it as it rumbles across the square. He leaps from it when it crashes to a halt.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
There is only one way to appease him!
(points)
They must be sent to their judgment in the other world!
(to the heavens)
Will this please you, Quetzalcoatl?

The SUN BREAKS OUT from behind the moon.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
The Lord of Light returns the sun!
The punishment is clear!
(re: Miguel & Chel)
Take them to the ceynote!

Lucero backs away, then turns, and races into the jungle.

Miguel and Chel are borne away. A shaft of golden light shines down on the broken icon of Miguel.

85 EXT. JUNGLE - ROCKY OUTCROPPING - DAY (DURING THE ECLIPSE) 85

Tulio clambers up a rocky outcropping, emerges above the top level of the jungle. He looks up --

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED: 85

The ECLIPSED SUN is re-emerging with full-force. The nighttime insect sounds FADE. But the sky above is still a hazy, unnatural brown. Tulio gazes out over the jungle --

A huge BLACK CLOUD OF SMOKE rises from the ocean shore. Beneath the black cloud are several distance-dwindled ships, Spanish galleons.

And from the coast, in a virtual straight line, is a path of destruction. At the front of it, HUNDREDS of Cortes' soldiers hack methodically through the jungle, blades and armor glinting in the sun, a wide swath of destruction in their wake. Their path is heading inexorably toward --

-- the city.

TULIO
Cortes.

FROM BEHIND HIM comes a sound -- something big coming through the jungle. Tulio cowers back, waiting ...

86 EXT. CEYNOTE WELL - DAY 86

Drums POUND. Miguel and Chel, hands bound behind them, are held by GUARDS on the tip of the serpent tongue that reaches out over the pit. Miguel's shaky; blood runs down his side.

The sky is shaded blood red (from the smoke of the burning of Cortes' ships). Tzekel-Kan and the Chief atop the temple.

TZEKEL-KAN
The hour of reckoning has arrived!

The crowd murmurs their agreement. They are restless, anticipatory.

Chel blinks, tries to focus, the drugs starting to wear off. She rolls her head, sees an ugly guard. Doesn't react. Rolls her head the other way. Sees Miguel, frowns.

CHEL
I had a really strange dream --
(suddenly worried)
-- we didn't, um, get married or anything, did we?

MIGUEL
Not exactly.

He inclines his head: 'Look down.' Chel looks -- sees the ceynote pit beneath them.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED: 86

CHEL
Great, I had to pick now to sober up.

TZEKEL-KAN
Our sentries have brought news of a great force marching toward our city! The pretender has brought this upon us!

Miguel glances down at the distant water. To Chel:

MIGUEL
Has anyone ever survived this?

CHEL
Including us, there would be ... Let's see. One. Two ...
(she runs out)
Two.

Miguel grimaces, not encouraged.

87 EXT. CEYNOTE - EDGE OF JUNGLE - DAY 87

Tulio, riding Lucero, emerges from the jungle to where he can see the ceynote pit in the distance. He doesn't like what sees: Miguel and Chel about to be tossed in.

TULIO
Oh, no --

AT THE CEYNOTE: Tzekel-Kan raises his arms.

TZEKEL-KAN
We shall reaffirm our faith through <u>blood</u>!
(points at Miguel & Chel)
Start with theirs!

The guards shove Miguel and Chel --
They PLUMMET --
Tulio cries out, his voice lost in the ROAR of the crowd --
They SPLASH into the ceynote --
They break the surface, treading water. The underwater current begins to drag them around the perimeter of the well; the ceynote is a whirlpool.

Tzekel-Kan drops his arms. Raises a fist.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: 87

TZEKEL-KAN
We prepare now -- for war! So say I -- the Speaker for the Gods!

The crowd SCREAMS their approval. They follow as Tzekel-Kan leads them away from the pit.

Tulio and Lucero race up from the other side. Tulio looks in.

Chel and Miguel, their faces barely above the surface, moving in a tighter circle around the center of the well. Chel slips under.

TULIO
Chel! Miguel!

Miguel slips beneath the surface --

Tulio looks around wildly. He grabs the rope that forms a handrail around the perimeter of the well. Yanks one end free from some its moorings. He steps to the edge of the well --

-- and hesitates. It's a long way down.

TULIO
(working up his courage)
Talk about a fall from grace ...

-- and then he dives into the well.

88 INT. CEYNOTE - UNDERWATER - DAY 88

Tulio crashes through the surface of the water, gets his bearings, then knifes down toward the bottom of the well.

The whirlpool becomes a vortex toward the bottom, where the water drains through a chasm. The well becomes more narrow, a funnel. The current has cut ledges into the walls --

Tulio hangs in the water; his eyes widen --

-- he is SURROUNDED BY GOLD. All the tribute that has ever been dropped into the well is caught on walls. Tons of GOLD, sparkling and glowing spectacularly.

Tulio has found the TEMPLE OF GOLD.

The whirlpool pulls him close to the walls -- only the rope he hangs onto keeps him from being plastered against them. He reaches out for a jade-encrusted knife, pulls away a gorgeous golden helmet --

Exposed beneath it is --

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: 88

A bleached-white SKULL. Tulio's eyes go wide again. He drops the helmet -- it's swept away. He looks again at the walls -- and this time he sees the SKELETONS arrayed along the ledges, a grim audience in an carrion amphitheater. And in with them are --

MIGUEL and CHEL. Pinned against the wall. Staring, panicked, at Tulio. Blood dying the water around Miguel, whose looking really bad.

Tulio gives the gold once last glance. Makes his choice: the lives of his friends. He GRABS SOMETHING from the ledge, then kicks over to Miguel and Chel. One hand still on the rope, he cuts through their bonds with the JADE KNIFE, lets the knife go. They grab the rope with him.

The three of them pull themselves along the rope, against the pull of the vortex, struggling toward the surface --

89 EXT. CEYNOTE - DAY 89

The rope creaks -- then yanks loose of its mooring poppoppop! Lucero's ears go up in panic. He dives for the rope, but can't reach it in time -- it slithers into the well.

90 INT. CEYNOTE - UNDERWATER - DAY 90

Tulio, Chel and Miguel are suddenly free-floating. The centrifugal force of the vortex slams them back against the wall. They get their feet on a ledge.

They watch as the rope is sucked through the chasm at the bottom of the well.

The three look at each other, scared. Look up. No way -- they could never out swim the pull of the vortex. Chel points down at the chasm. Shrugs. Tulio and Miguel exchange a glance. Shrug simultaneously.

Miguel pushes off the wall, off the ledge -- and is sucked toward the chasm. Chel goes next, and then Tulio (with a roll of his eyes).

The three disappear into the darkness of the chasm --

91 INT. UNDERGROUND RIVER - DAY 91

Miguel, Chel and Tulio bobsled through the flume, banging into walls.

Miguel spies something ahead: LIGHT. An exit from the tunnel into a lake --

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: 91

BUT NOT LARGE ENOUGH FOR THEM. They slam up against a large boulder, blocking most of the exit.

Miguel braces himself, STRAINS TO MOVE THE BOULDER. It's hard work --

But it gives. The three are spit out into the lake.

Chel and Tulio swim for the surface. Tulio realizes that Miguel's not with them. He looks back --

Miguel is drifting, looking for all the world like he's dead.

Tulio kicks back down to him. Hauls him to the surface --

92 EXT. JUNGLE - LAKE - DAY 92

Tulio and Chel break the surface of the lake, Tulio gasping. They struggle to shore, supporting Miguel. Lucero races toward them --

93 EXT. LAKE - SHORE - DAY 93

Tulio and Chel pull Miguel out of the water. Tulio is frantic. Slaps Miguel's face lightly.

TULIO
C'mon, don't die -- You can't die, Miguel --

MIGUEL
... stop hitting me ...

TULIO
Miguel! You're not going to die!

MIGUEL
... don't have much say in the matter ...
(grabs Tulio's arm)
... cortes is coming ... this is all my --

TULIO
I don't want to hear it.

MIGUEL
... i'm sorry ... can you forgive me ...

Miguel raises his hand to Tulio. Tulio clasps it.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: 93

TULIO
(softly)
What's to forgive?

MIGUEL
... tulio ... you've got to save them ...

TULIO
Without you? I need you. You're the one who always did everything. I just egged you on.

MIGUEL
... i never could have ... if you hadn't.

He holds out his hand to Chel. She takes it. Then Miguel puts her hand and Tulio's together.

MIGUEL
(as much smile as he can manage)
... she's gonna be trouble. lucky you ...
(coughs blood)
You made my life rich, Tulio.

He seems to have something else to say -- but can't. Eyes open, he dies.

TULIO
We were always rich, Miguel.

Tulio reaches out gently, shuts Miguel's eyes. And then he starts to cry, cradles Miguel to his chest.

TULIO
(a whisper)
I love you.

Chel puts her arm around Tulio. Tulio lowers Miguel gently to the ground. Lucero arrives. He slows ... takes in the scene. Lowers his head. Tulio looks up at Chel.

TULIO
We have to get everyone out of the city. Before Cortes gets there.

CHEL
How? They know you are not a god.

TULIO
I've got a plan. Sort of.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: 93

He rests a gentle hand Miguel's chest.

TULIO (CONT'D)
(addressing Miguel)
I still need you ... one last time.

94 EXT. CITY - DAY 94

On the steps of the central temple, Tzekel-Kan addresses the people of the city, rallying them to battle.

TZEKEL-KAN
In the next world, a special place is reserved for brave warriors!

WARRIORS in animal skins shout their approval. Some have poles on their backs that raise fearsome heads above them, making them look nine feet tall.

The Chief, dressed in a boar-skin, stands, spear in hand, ready to lead his men -- but he's not happy about it.

TZEKEL-KAN (CONT'D)
Glory to all who die so that the city may live --

TULIO (O.S.)
If you fight, you'll all be slaughtered!

The crowd looks for the source of the voice -- Tulio stands on the steps of the main pyramid.

TZEKEL-KAN
The other pretender! Kill him!

Tulio dives for cover behind the huge Miguel head. Spears clatter off of it. He clambers atop it.

TULIO
Listen to me! You <u>can not</u> win! Here's an idea: Run away! Forget the city -- it's not important! Save yourselves! Save your children!

The Chief lowers his war club, considering Tulio's words.

95 EXT. JUNGLE - EDGE OF CITY 95

In the DARKNESS of the jungle at the edge of the city, Chel holds Lucero, one arm up and under his neck. She strokes him, calming him.

Suddenly, Lucero snorts, surges forward. Chel grabs for him, tries to hold him back. No good. Lucero bolts away from her, knocking her aside.

96 EXT. CITY - DAY 96

Tzekel-Kan sees the expressions of indecision on people's faces. He climbs higher on the pyramid steps. Shouts:

TZEKEL-KAN
No! We must fight, to the death!
The gods demand it!

From one side of the crowd comes a commotion. Tulio looks --

MIGUEL APPEARS from out of the jungle, riding Lucero. Miguel is wearing the beautiful, colorful robe Chel made in the Olmec ruins. He looks splendid. He looks like a god. There are GASPS at the sight.

CHIEF
Quetzacoatl ...

Voices cry out 'Quetzacoatl has returned!' 'He has returned from the ceynote!' Miguel rides through the crowd.

TULIO
(picking up on it)
Yes! Quetzacoatl has come back!

Tzekel-Kan stares at Miguel, half in wonder, half in fear.

TZEKEL-KAN
No ... he was sent to the other
world! He was mortal!

He backs up the steps, away from the apparition --

Lucero nears the Chief. From Tulio's point of view, Miguel's arm seems to drop, his hand open in a gesture of supplication.

The Chief's eyes widen; he stares at Miguel. Lucero continues on, his hooves clopping on the stone. The Chief's warclub drops to the ground.

One-by-one -- then by DOZENS, then HUNDREDS -- the people drop their weapons.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED: 96

TZEKEL-KAN
No! You can't run! You must defend my city!

Miguel pauses at the edge of the jungle. The people of the city move past. They disappear amongst the foliage, a la 'Field of Dreams.' Some seem to simply fade into the jungle. Some seem to flicker into animal shapes as they vanish, an out-of-the-corner-of-the-eye impression.

Tulio watches it all happily. Chel hurries down the steps of the pyramid to beside him. She's carrying a bag of supplies -- and Miguel's guitar.

TULIO
Perfect timing. Lucero was right on cue.

CHEL
Not because of me. He went on his own.

That takes Tulio aback. He looks back at Miguel --

Miguel is looking straight up at him. One sharp nod of his head -- Tulio's eyes go wide --
And then, not quite naturally, Miguel turns forward on Lucero, and Lucero leaps into the jungle --

TULIO
Miguel!

He runs into the jungle after him, Chel on his heels --

HIGH ANGLE ON: Tzekel-Kan. Standing in the middle of the city. Alone, hundreds of weapons discarded around him. The wind WHISTLES through the lattices eerily.

TZEKEL-KAN
This is ... my city.

And as we watch, the colors of the city slowly begin to fade, losing their vibrancy, their life -- the MAGIC of the city is gone.

And then Tzekel-Kan's gaze drifts to the jungle opposite where the people disappeared. His eyes go wide --

A DARK SHAPE (the flickering silhouette of Cortes' army) moves through the trees, silently.

Tzekel-Kan is frightened. He takes a step back, never taking his eyes off the jungle. -- and finds himself backed against a large stele. AROUND HIM, the city continues to FADE.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED: 96

THE DARK SHAPE grows larger, coming nearer, still silent.

ON TZEKEL-KAN, terrified -- and then his color begins to fade like the city's. He seems to be losing his dimensionality. Tooth and Nail emerge from his robes. They stare at the jungle in terror.

THE DARK SHAPE is just on the other side of the trees --

TOOTH
(a whisper)
Is it ... as the prophecies foretell?

NAIL
(a whisper)
Is it ... Quetzalcoatl?

And then they FLATTEN OUT against the stele -- as does Tzekel-Kan. The final color fades from the city. There is no more magic left.

And Tzekel-Kan and Tooth & Nail are just another carving on dead stone.

ANGLE ON - THE JUNGLE -- a DARK FORM leaps out --
It is CORTES, on a BLACK STALLION. And then his ARMY breaks through the foliage, crushing it, accompanied by all the sound of their movement.

HIGH ANGLE - THE CITY. Cortes and his army stand on the edge of the square of the empty, unliving city.

97 EXT. JUNGLE - SUNSET 97

Tulio and Chel run through the jungle. They catch sight of Lucero ahead of them, Miguel still on his back. And then Lucero heads up a hill, the sun in front of him.

Lucero and Miguel become a silhouette. At the crest of the hill, they are MERGE into the FLARING BRIGHTNESS of the sun. The silhouette of an EAGLE emerges from the glare, soaring up into the sky.

Tulio and Chel crest the hill, searching. They spot LUCERO. Riderless. Grazing. He raises his head, looks at them.

Tulio and Chel move slowly toward him. They glance at each other, wide-eyed. Then Tulio looks back at Lucero. Lucero meets his gaze.

Then Lucero shakes his head as horses will, and lowers his head to return to grazing.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED: 97

Tulio looks up. High above, the EAGLE circles.

Tulio reaches out for Chel's hand. Lucero munches grass as the two of them stand hand-in-hand, gazing up at the sky.

DISSOLVE TO:

98 EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY 98

Tulio walks along, strumming Miguel's guitar. Grimaces when he hits a sour note.

Three children ride on Lucero. Tulio and Chel walk alongside.

KID ON HORSE
I knew all along he really was Quetzacoatl.

Tulio and Chel glance at each other, smile.

CHEL
Do either of us have any idea where we're going?

TULIO
We'll know it when we get there.

CHEL
You're not still trying to find El Dorado, are you?

TULIO
Finding it is easy.

He slings the guitar over his back. Takes her hands, gazes into her eyes.

TULIO (CONT'D)
You just have to know where to look.

She smiles up at him. They kiss.

In the sky above them, an EAGLE calls its approval, and soars into the sun --

THE END